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# Pharaonic Egyptian Clothing



— *by* —

Gillian VOGELSANG-EASTWOOD

E.J. BRILL

# STUDIES IN TEXTILE AND COSTUME HISTORY

EDITED BY

GILLIAN VOGELSANG-EASTWOOD

VOLUME 2



# PHARAONIC EGYPTIAN CLOTHING

BY

GILLIAN VOGELSANG-EASTWOOD



E.J. BRILL  
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CONTENTS

List of tables .....	vii
List of maps and plates .....	ix
Chronology .....	xiii
Preface and acknowledgements .....	xv
Glossary .....	xvii
List of abbreviations used in the text .....	xviii
1 Introduction .....	1
2 Loincloths .....	10
3 Aprons .....	32
4 Kilts and Skirts .....	53
5 Sashes and Straps .....	72
6 The Archaic Wrap-around .....	88
7 Dresses .....	95
8 Bag-tunics .....	130
9 Shawls and Cloaks .....	155
10 Headgear .....	169
11 Conclusions .....	179
Bibliography .....	185
Indices .....	193
Maps and Plates .....	

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Measurements of V-necked dresses in various collections, listed in chronological order .....	123
Table 2. Measurements of full-length bag-tunics in various collections, listed in chronological order .....	139
Table 3. Measurements of child-size bag-tunics in various collections, listed in chronological order .....	141
Table 4. Measurements of half-length bag-tunics in various collections, listed in chronological order .....	151

## LIST OF MAPS AND PLATES

### Map

- 1 Map of Egypt and Nubia showing the position of the sites and tombs referred to in the text

### Plates

- 1 Cloth loincloth from Thebes (after Carnarvon and Carter 1912, pl. LXIX:1)
- 2 Cloth loincloth and kerchief from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (EM 758; author's photograph)
- 3a Cloth loincloths from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 62)
- 3b Pile of cloth loincloths from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 64)
- 4 Point of a cloth loincloth now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM #T.62, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)
- 5 Remains of a stained leather loincloth (#31.3.71, Rogers Fund, 1931, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)
- 6 Leather loincloth found in the tomb of Mahirper, Thebes (Acc. #03.1035, Gift of Theodore M. Davies, courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)
- 7 The two leather loincloths found in the tomb of Mahirper, Thebes (a) is now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (see pl. 6); (b) was sent to the Field Museum, Chicago (after Carter 1903:46-47)
- 8 Undecorated leather garment from Balabish (after Wainwright 1920, pl. IX, courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society, London)
- 9 Pierced leather loincloth from Balabish (after Wainwright 1920, pl. X:20, courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society, London)
- 10 One of two leather loincloths now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM 910.105.1, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)
- 11 Leather loincloth now in the British Museum, London (BM 2564, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London)
- 12 Child's leather loincloth now in the British Museum, London (BM 21999, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London)
- 13 Fragment of a leather loincloth now in the Museum Alter Plastik, Frankfurt (no. 2652, courtesy of the Städtische Galerie Liebieghaus)



- 14 Fragment of a leather loincloth now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (no. 1882.15, courtesy of the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)
- 15 Close-up of the twisting technique used on a fragment of leather loincloth now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM 910.105.1, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)
- 16 Close-up of the slitting technique used on a fragment of leather loincloth now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (no. 1882.15, courtesy of the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)
- 17 Meroitic apron from Gebel Adda, Nubia (ROM #62, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)
- 18 Beaded 'kilt' from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (Carter's no. 46.kk, courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)
- 19 Fringed sash from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (courtesy of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)
- 20 Plain sash now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden (provenance unknown, prov. acc. no. 320, courtesy of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden)
- 21a Tapestry ends from two elaborate sashes found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (nos. 21ff, 21ee, courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)
- 21b Tapestry end from an elaborate sash found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (no. 100f, courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)
- 22 The girdle of Rameses III (M.11158, courtesy of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, Liverpool)
- 23 Wrap-around dress now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM 906.18.41, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)
- 24 Wrap-around dress now in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (E.6204, courtesy of the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels)
- 25 Photograph of a V-necked 'dress' found at Giza (courtesy of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)
- 26 The Tarkhan dress (UC 28614 Bi, courtesy of the Petrie Museum, London)
- 27 Two dresses from Deshasha (UC 31182 and 31183, courtesy of the Petrie Museum, London)
- 28 Pleated V-necked dress found at Gebelein (after Hall and Pedrini 1984, pl. XXII)
- 29 Pleated V-necked dress from Naga-ed-Der (#34.56, courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)
- 30 Pleated V-necked dress from Asyut (Louvre 12026, courtesy of the Louvre Museum, Paris, copyright Photo R.M.N.)

- 31 Bead-net dress from Giza (#27.1548, courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)
- 32 Bead-net dress from Qau (UC 17743, courtesy of the Petrie Museum, London)
- 33 Bag-tunic found at Deir el-Medinah (after Bruyère 1937, II, fig. 31:1)
- 34 Plain bag-tunic from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli 1927, pl. 68)
- 35 Undecorated bag-tunic from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (courtesy of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)
- 36 Bag-tunic found around the mummy of Nakht the weaver (#910.4.3.1, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)
- 37 Child's tunic found in a grave at the temple of Mentuhotep, Thebes (MMA 25.3.215, Rogers Fund, 1925, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)
- 38 Button neck-opening from a bag-tunic, found at the Workmen's Village, Amarna (author's photograph)
- 39 Decorated bag-tunic now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden (E1, courtesy of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden)
- 40 Decorated bag-tunic from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)
- 41 Decorated bag-tunic from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli, 1927, fig. 69)
- 42 Half bag-tunic now in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (E.2486, courtesy of the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels)
- 43 A kerchief found just outside the tomb of Tut'ankhamun, Thebes (MMA 09.184.219, Gift of Theodore M. Davis, 1909, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)
- 44 Head wearing the kerchief from Tut'ankhamun's mummification equipment (see plate 43, MMA 09.184.219. Gift of Theodore M. Davis, 1909, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

## CHRONOLOGY

The dates given below are approximate and should not be regarded definitive (based on J. Baines and J. Malek, *Atlas of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 1980:36-37).

Late Predynastic	ca. 3000	
Early Dynastic period	ca. 2920-2575	
Dynasty 1		ca. 2920-2770
Dynasty 2		ca. 2770-2649
Dynasty 3		ca. 2649-2575
The Old Kingdom	ca. 2575-2134	
Dynasty 4		ca. 2575-2465
Dynasty 5		ca. 2465-2323
Dynasty 6		ca. 2323-2150
Dynasties 7-8		ca. 2150-2134
First Intermediate Period	ca. 2134-2040	
Dynasties 9-10		ca. 2134-2040
Dynasty 11i		ca. 2134-2040
The Middle Kingdom	ca. 2040-1640	
Dynasty 11ii		ca. 2040-1991
Dynasty 12		ca. 1991-1783
Dynasty 13		ca. 1783-after 1640
Dynasty 14		a group of minor kings who were probably all contemporary with the 13th or 15th Dynasty
The Second Intermediate Period	ca. 1640-1532	
Dynasties 15-16 (the Hyksos)		ca. 1663-1555
Dynasty 17		ca. 1640-1550



The New Kingdom	<i>ca.</i> 1550-1070	
Dynasty 18		<i>ca.</i> 1570-1307
Dynasty 19		<i>ca.</i> 1307-1196
Dynasty 20		<i>ca.</i> 1196-1070
Third Intermediate Period	<i>ca.</i> 1070-712	
Dynasty 21		<i>ca.</i> 1070-945
Dynasty 22		<i>ca.</i> 945-712
Dynasty 23		<i>ca.</i> 828-712
Dynasty 24		<i>ca.</i> 724-712
Dynasty 25i		<i>ca.</i> 770-712
The Later Period	<i>ca.</i> 712-332	
Dynasty 25ii		<i>ca.</i> 712-657
Dynasty 26		<i>ca.</i> 664-525
Dynasty 27 (Persian)		<i>ca.</i> 525-404
Dynasty 28		<i>ca.</i> 404-399
Dynasty 29		<i>ca.</i> 399-380
Dynasty 30		<i>ca.</i> 380-343
Second Persian Period	<i>ca.</i> 343-332	
Graeco-Roman Period	<i>ca.</i> 332 B.C. - A.D. 395	

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the course of working as a textile specialist on various excavations in Egypt, I became aware of how little information was available about the construction and appearance of examples of Pharaonic Egyptian clothing. Indeed most people are surprised to learn that any have actually survived. The following study developed out of my own questions and enquiries into this subject. It is intended to be a guide to the clothing types worn in Ancient Egypt and to the problem as to how the clothes were made, based on surviving garments. The book is aimed at a general audience interested in Egyptian material culture. The presumption is made that the reader will have a slight, but not extensive, knowledge of textile and sewing terminology.

I re-made nearly all of the garments described in the book and during my seminars on Egyptian textiles and clothing the students tried on everything and gave their comments. This exercise provided a useful insight into how the garments looked when worn, and the problems involved in simply getting them on and off.

Innumerable individuals and institutes have helped during the course of writing this book and I am extremely grateful to all of them. A few, however, should be mentioned specifically, notably (in alphabetical order), R. Chanciner, J. van Haeringen, R. Hall, N. Kajatani, N. Millet, M. Raven, R. Shaw, R. van Walsem, W. Wendrich, H. Whitehouse, L. Woolley, and members of staff from the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Department of Egyptology, Koninklijke Musea, Brussels, the Department of Egyptology, the Louvre Museum, as well as E. Miles, The Griffith Institute, Oxford. I should especially like to thank the students and staff of the Department of Egyptology, Leiden University, for their help and forbearance while I was writing this study.

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Finally, a large word of thanks needs to go to Willem for his patience with me during all phases of research and writing.



## GLOSSARY

apron	one or more pieces of cloth attached in some manner to a belt or band fastened around the waist. Such garments ranged in form from several strips of cloth, simple triangular shapes to elaborate pleated objects which went from the waist to the ankles.
archaic tunic	rectangle of cloth wrapped once or more around the upper torso and underneath the armpits and then knotted at the left shoulder. A sash was sometimes worn with it. It was usually worn by men.
bag-tunic	a long rectangle of cloth folded in half and sewn up the sides. Gaps were left on either side at the top as armholes. A hole was usually cut out in the centre top of the cloth for the head. There were two distinct sizes of bag-tunics: a short or half version which was between hip and knee length, and a longer form, which was between calf and ankle length.
bead-dress	a long or short dress made totally out of a network of disk, cylinder and decorative beads. Such dresses were worn with or without an undergarment of some kind.
belt	a length of leather worn around the waist (see sash).
cap	a small, brimless piece of headgear which has been shaped in some manner.

chain stitch



chevron pleating

the arranging of cloth into regular folds, which lie both in a horizontal and vertical direction. Synonyms include herringbone pleating.

cloak/mantle

a loose, sleeveless, outer garment of various lengths worn by both sexes over their other clothes. It could be worn both indoors or out-of-doors.

couching

the sewing down of a thread laid upon the surface of the cloth. The laid thread is fastened down with small stitches, using a second, smaller thread.



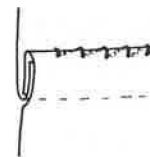
cut-to-shape

garments cut to specific shapes, usually triangles or rectangles, and then sewn down some or all of the edges in order to create the necessary form. Such garments were not tailored to fit a body closely and as such did not include darts, tucks, gathers, etc.

dress

a garment worn by women which fitted closely to the upper part of the body with either a flowing or tightly fitting skirt.

flat seam

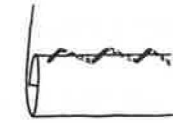


headband

a single, narrow length of cloth which may or may not have been neatened along the longitudinal and transverse edges. It was usually tied around the forehead.

hem

the border or edging of a piece of cloth which is usually folded over and sewn down in some manner to strengthen the area or prevent the material from unravelling.



kerchiefs

a piece of cloth which covered part or all of the head. In general they were made out of a single piece of cloth neatened around the edges, but not sewn into a specific shape.

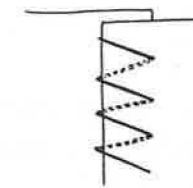
kilt

a wrap-around garment worn by men which covered part or all of the lower half of the body (see skirt).

loincloth

a simple garment, part of which was wrapped around the waist, while the rest was drawn between the legs. Synonyms include breech cloth and breech clout

overlapped seam

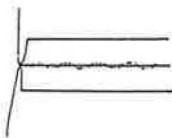


plying

the twisting together of two or more previously spun or reeled threads.



- plaiting the interlacing or intertwining of threads to form a plait, band, cord or rope.
- pleating the arranging of cloth into regular folds, which usually lie either in a horizontal or vertical direction.
- resist-dyed a dyeing technique whereby a gum, paste, mud or wax is placed on a textile to prevent a dye or pigment from colouring that particular region of the cloth.
- rolled and whipped hem synonyms include rolled and over-cast hem.
- sash a length of cloth usually worn around the waist, or upper part of the body.
- seam the junction made by sewing together the edges of two or more pieces of cloth.
- selvedge the side edge of a textile where the weft turns back.
- shawl the term shawl is being used in this book to indicate a short, sleeveless garment which fitted around the neck and fell over the shoulders.
- sheath dress popular name for a wrap-around dress worn with straps.
- simple seam



- skirt a wrap-around garment worn by women which covered part or all of the lower half of the body (see kilt).
- s-spin the anti-clockwise spinning of a thread so that the fibres lie in the same direction as the middle stroke of the letter S.
- stem stitch
- strap a simple length of cloth of varying widths and sizes. In general, a body strap is a narrow piece of cloth which was placed around the upper part of the body, usually one or both shoulders. It could be functional, ornamental or symbolic in nature.
- tassel two or more threads, cords, etc, tied together with a knot.
- v-necked dress cut-to-shape dress with a V/shaped neckline, both with or without sleeves.
- warp/end the system of parallel threads which is kept under tension in the loom. 'Ends' are the individual warp threads.
- warp-fringe length of warp thread with a knot at the bottom. They were made after the cloth had been woven.





**weft/pick** the system of threads that run horizontally or from side to side on the loom. 'Picks' are the individual weft threads.

**weft-fringe** series of compact loops which extend from the selvedge of the cloth. The fringe is created during the weaving of the cloth on a ground loom. This type of fringe only occurs on the left-hand selvedge.



**wrap-around** a garment made up of one or more lengths of cloth which swathed or enveloped the body in various ways.

**wrap-around dress** one or more pieces of cloth wrapped around the female body to create a garment. Wrap-around dresses were often worn with straps. The simplest form of this type of garment is commonly known as a 'sheath dress'.

**z-spin** the clockwise spinning of a thread so that the fibres lie in the same direction as the middle stroke of the letter Z.



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

AMNH	American Museum of Natural History, New York
BH	Beni Hasan
BM	British Museum, London
BMFA	Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
CCG	Cairo, Catalogue Général
EM	Egyptian Museum, Cairo
JE/JdE	Journal d'Entrée (Egyptian Museum, Cairo)
LD	Lepsius <i>Denkmäler</i>
MMA	Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
OI	The Oriental Institute, Chicago
RMO	Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden
ROM	Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto
RS	Right side (of cloth)
TT	Theban tomb number
TM	Textile Museum, Washington
UC	University College, London
VA	Victoria and Albert Museum, London
WS	Wrong side (of cloth)

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

There would seem to be thousands upon thousands of cloth fragments in museums throughout the world labelled "Egyptian linen". And there are numerous curators and textile specialists who despair of ever being able to do anything with such pieces. In some cases they suspect, or wish, that these pieces represent items of clothing, but precise knowledge as to how they should fit into any Pharaonic Egyptian piece of costume is lacking. Similar problems are encountered on excavations throughout Egypt where large quantities of cloth can be encountered, often in the form of tiny scraps from a village rubbish tip. Which of these fragments formed part of a loincloth, or a tunic, and what can these pieces tell about the construction of these garments? The present book was written with the objective of answering at least some of the above questions. It should provide Egyptologists, archaeologists, museum staff and 'others', who are working either on site or in public or private collections, with a guide to the range of clothes which may be found in an Egyptian context.

Although there are a number of books and articles on the subject of ancient Egyptian costume, it is noticeable that practically all describe the development of Egyptian fashion primarily with the help of tomb paintings, sculptures, and other representations. These studies furthermore tend to focus on the costume worn by deities or by royalty and the court. All too often there is scant reference to garments which have actually survived. Consequently mistakes are made, and it is difficult to gain an impression of the range of clothes worn by people on a daily basis, be they servant or pharaoh.

To fill this lacuna the following study uses surviving garments and their construction as its mainstay. Wherever possible, details are given concerning where a garment was found and how secure the given provenance and attributed date actually are. In some case, however, the available information is somewhat scanty and has to be treated with caution. In addition, only a representative sample of garments have been cited, rather than describing every single surviving example. Needless to say, sometimes this 'sampling of objects' has been frustrated due to the lack of suitable items. Furthermore emphasis has been placed on garments from

non-royal contexts in order to explore the nature of everyday clothing. Nevertheless, this does not mean that such a potentially rich source of information as the textiles from the New Kingdom tomb of Tut'ankhamun (ca. 1333 -1323 B.C.) at Thebes, has been ignored. In general, however, the textiles from this tomb are used for comparative purposes, rather than for entering into a discussion concerning the nature of a royal wardrobe.

The use of extant garments, often with known provenances, means that it is also possible to give some idea of the date when particular garment types, with their specific structural details, were in use, thus providing an independent medium to check depictions of clothing. The obvious drawback to such an approach is that not all excavated tombs, whose contents may include textiles, have been properly published and information on the finds is often minimal to say the least. Or, as is all too frequently the case, references in excavation reports are scant and of little actual value, because textile finds were regarded as unimportant and uninteresting. Yet, just as the Ancient Egyptians regarded it, in many areas of the world today cloth and garments are still thought of as one of the most important elements in a person's life. Clothing was an obvious symbol of someone's social position and wealth.<sup>1</sup> It was a form of currency, which could be used as security for a loan, sold in an emergency, given away as a mark of honour, or passed on from one generation to another. It is not surprising, therefore, to see the care with which cloth or garments were treated in the past. Nor is it so remarkable to see how cloth figured prominently in many Egyptian tombs, for example, in the form of actual objects, items in the list of tomb offerings, as well as in tomb paintings.

It is fortunate for the study of ancient Egyptian clothing that cloth was placed in tombs, and that the quantities are considerable. Perhaps the best known example for illustrating this point is the New Kingdom tomb of Tut'ankhamun at Thebes, in which literally hundreds of pieces of cloth and garments were found.<sup>2</sup> But even a relatively modest tomb was often furnished with considerable amounts of cloth. During the fifteenth century B.C. the family of Hatnefer and Ra'mose provided their joint tomb at Thebes with seventy-six long-fringed sheets or bolts of cloth, each folded into a neat rectangle, as well as a bolster or pillow of red leather; an old

<sup>1</sup> For various studies concerning the role of cloth in ancient and modern societies, see Barber 1991 and Weiner and Schneider 1991.

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Pfister 1937; Crowfoot and Davies 1941; Hall 1986a.

"shirt"; eighteen shawls; fourteen sheets of linen and shrouds, not to mention the vast quantity of cloth which was used to wrap the bodies.<sup>3</sup>

The quantity of cloth in Egyptian tombs also raises the tantalizing question as to whether tomb robbers in ancient times were always seeking valuable objects such as gold and jewelry, or whether they were also looking for cloth and garments which could be more easily sold and for which there was a large market throughout Egypt. This question was briefly dwelt upon by W. Flinders Petrie, when discussing the amount of clothing and cloth found in the Fifth to Sixth Dynasty tomb 148b at Deshasha (Petrie 1898:31). But little further research seems to have been carried out on this point.

Questions need to be raised as to how many of the surviving items were actually day-to-day pieces and how many were specially made for the grave. Or, indeed how many were ordinary garments which had been modified for use in a grave? In some cases the answer is clear. The condition of the cloth, evidence of wear and mending show that the object was used before being deposited in the tomb. In other cases, however, there is some room for doubt and speculation. A notable example are the Deshasha "sheath" dresses now in the Petrie Museum, London (see page 116). It is evident from their size that these garments cannot have been easy to wear in real life in their present form. Why then were they made so long and narrow?

Although the basic approach and emphasis lies on extant garments and fragments of clothing, this does not mean, as already indicated earlier, that such a valuable source of information as paintings and sculptures is ignored. These representations are essential to a study of how ancient Egyptian clothing was worn and the changes which occurred over the centuries. But while looking at such sources it is necessary to be aware of the formalized and conservative nature of Pharaonic art.<sup>4</sup> J.J. Janssen in his book *Commodity Prices from the Ramessid Period* summarized the problems of using depictions of garments as follows: firstly, account has to be taken of the conservative nature of the artists, who were representing clothes worn in an earlier period (Janssen 1975:249-250). Secondly, it was probable that the clothes worn by labourers in the fields may not have been the same as they wore at home, just as modern workers change out of their overalls. Thirdly, there may have been differences in the type of clothes worn both

<sup>3</sup> Lansing and Hayes 1937:24-26. For a discussion about the various "shirts", see page 131.

<sup>4</sup> For comments on the principles behind Egyptian paintings and reliefs, see Schäfer 1986; Robins 1986.



throughout the year and at various times of the day. Fourthly, the tomb owners may have been depicted in their "Sunday best". Finally, he noted that the tombs had a religious aspect and that this should be taken into account when looking at clothing types.

Although Janssen's conclusions are of significance to the present study, several comments need to be made. Firstly, in many cases, as will be shown in the following chapters, the surviving garments can be compared with contemporary representations, so care has to be taken when considering the actual degree of archaicism in depictions of Egyptian clothing. Secondly, the concept that the average ancient Egyptian worker changed his or her clothes after finishing the daily work is intriguing, but it presupposes that it was normal to wear different clothes at various times of the day and that people owned several sets of clothes. Finally, Janssen refers to the concept that the tomb owners were presented wearing their "Sunday best" and that these garments cannot be taken to represent daily wear; an important point. But can such an argument be applied to the other, lesser figures represented in a tomb painting? What after all was the "Sunday best" clothing of a woman working in a kitchen or a man butchering an animal? Indeed, what was the actual religious significance of such people within a tomb scene and to what extent did this effect the way in which the artist depicted their clothing? Again these are questions which fall beyond the scope of this study, but it is necessary to be aware of their existence.

When looking at representations of clothing it is also necessary to be aware that the artist may have tried to highlight a specific feature of the garment in question, rather than giving an accurate representation of the item. If, for example, a man is shown wearing a loincloth opened at the front (see fig. 2:2), is it because the artist wanted to show that the garment could be opened, or is it because under certain circumstances they were actually worn open? This is again a range of questions which would prove difficult to answer satisfactorily. However, as this study is intended to be a guide to surviving examples of Pharaonic clothing, problems concerning the nature of artistic representations can be left aside for the present.

Other difficulties encountered when using such secondary material as tomb paintings include the prominence given in published accounts to line drawings. All too often the original colours of the garments are not indicated. Or, and perhaps more seriously, apparently insignificant details are missed, thus reducing the quality of the information.

A specific problem encountered while working with representations is the different interpretations which can and are given to certain details, and in particular how surface treatment is dealt with. For example, there is an early dynastic statuette of a 'king' now in the British Museum, London (fig.

1:1; BM 37996). The man is wearing a short 'cloak', which could be described as being, among others, embroidered, quilted or knitted, depending upon the main interest of the writer. All that really can be said is that as depicted he is wearing a garment which has been patterned.

Despite the difficulties enumerated above, one of the fundamental problems encountered with respect to this study must lie in trying to understand what exactly the people were wearing and how these garments were made. E. Riefstahl summarized the situation as follows:

... the garments that have apparently been so faithfully represented by the ancient artists do not always lend themselves to exact interpretation: we are frequently at a loss to determine exactly how they were cut or adjusted to the body of the wearer. (Riefstahl 1970:244)

Thus, it is essential to start, wherever possible, with the actual garments when describing Egyptian clothing, so that the ambiguities encountered in the paintings and relief sculptures become more understandable.



Fig. 1:1 Ivory figure of an early Dynastic king wearing a patterned cloak (BM 37996)

One point which became clearer during the course of this study is that Egyptian clothing can be divided into two basic types:

(a) wrap-around garments: for example, kilts; skirts; some of the dresses; cloaks and finally, shawls. This form of garment literally consists of a length of cloth which was wrapped around the body in various ways. Nevertheless, the end use of the cloth did dictate its size. For example, a length used for a long woman's garment would not have been suitable for

a short, man's kilt. Thus the size of a piece of material may in some cases give some idea as to its original use, especially if it is complete.

(b) cut-to-shape garments: for example, loincloths; bag-tunics, and again some of the dresses. These garments tend to be simple triangles or rectangles, sewn down some or all the edges and fastened with cord ties. There is no evidence to suggest that such garments were closely tailored to fit individual figures. No garments have been identified with darts or complex shaping, elements which are common with modern clothing.

Once it is realized that a garment is one or the other type it makes the deciphering of garments easier.

It has also become apparent during the course of this study that the size of certain of the garments, notably, the kilts, skirts, dresses and bag-tunics were influenced by the type and size of loom used to make the cloth. The traditional Egyptian loom was the ground loom which is known to have been in use from Prehistory through to the New Kingdom and probably later (fig. 1:2; Roth 1951). In general, the width of the ground loom is based on the stretch of a weaver's arms. It is not surprising therefore to find that complete widths of cloth are normally between 100-130 cm in size. Because the longitudinal edges (selvedges) of a piece of cloth do not unravel, this

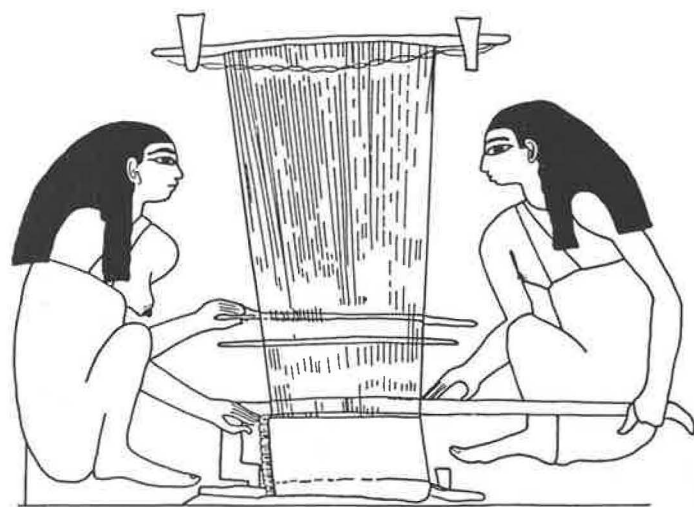


Fig. 1:2 Ground loom depicted in the tomb of Khnumhotep (Beni Hasan tomb 3, 12th Dynasty; after Roth 1951, fig. 6)

part of the material is often left intact, instead of neatening the region using a hem of some kind. A bag-tunic in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (E.6205), for example, includes both selvedges and has a complete cloth

width of 117.0 cm (see Table 2); while a woman's wrap-around dress (E.6204) in the same collection is made from a piece of cloth which has a complete cloth width of 103 cm.

Although it is clear from both the surviving garments, plus depictions, that some innovations occurred over a long period, there is no evidence as yet to suggest that short term fashion trends existed. Nor does there seem to have been an Egyptian equivalent of the spring and autumn collections in Paris and Milan, despite some writers' use of the term *haute couture* with all its implications when describing Egyptian garments (see for example, White 1963:87). In some cases the 'cut' of the basic garments remained the same for centuries, if not for millennia.

It is apparent from the various visual and written sources that certain garments were worn by both men and women. The two main examples are the cloth loincloth and bag-tunic. Other items, however, are more definitely male or female oriented, notably the leather loincloths worn by men and the various types of dresses which were only worn by women. Unfortunately there is little surviving evidence concerning the garments worn by children. It is likely, however, that they generally wore items similar to those of their same-sex parents, or as in the case of younger children, they went naked much of the time.

Written records and depictions also indicate that certain garments were restricted to particular occupations, for example, the garments worn by priests or prostitutes. Nevertheless, in many cases the basic garments, for instance the bag-tunic, were worn by people working in the fields, as well as by court officials and even the pharaoh. The differences lay not in the cut of the garment types, but rather in the quality of the material used, and the amount and range of decoration applied to the garment. As a result, therefore, although an indication has been given in the following monograph as to who would have worn a particular garment form, the concept of occupational clothing has not been discussed as such. One aspect which is difficult to judge is the influence of foreign costume ideas on Egyptian clothing. It is known from both visual and written sources that people of a wide range of nationalities visited Egypt or were known there, for example, Nubians, Syrians, Hittites and Minoans. But it is far more difficult to decide the extent to which their clothing influenced Egyptian ideas, or vice versa. Certain garments, notably the leather loincloth, are generally regarded as Nubian imports, while the use of tapestry ornamentation is seen to be the result of a possible Syrian/Hyksos influence (Riefstahl 1944:31-33; Geijer 1979:24). Such details, however, fall beyond the scope of this work, so apart from mentioning them in the relevant sections they will not be discussed further.

The present study has been divided into chapters which discuss the following, basic garment types: loincloths; aprons; kilts and skirts; straps and sashes; dresses; tunics; shawls and cloaks, and finally, headgear. The order is based on how and where they would have been worn, thus the loincloth, the ancient equivalent of underwear, is the first garment to be described. Each garment chapter has, in principle, been subdivided into four: firstly, there is a brief description of surviving garments; secondly, information is given about typical constructional details; thirdly, the iconographical evidence for the use of the garment is presented, and finally, there is a general discussion. It should be stressed that it is not the aim of this work to catalogue every single surviving garment, but rather to give an overall impression of what the basic items were, to define these garments with respect to their construction and appearance and to illustrate a number of possible variations.<sup>5</sup> In order to help define the various garment types, a glossary is given after the preface which includes the basic textile and clothing terms used in the book. The study is concluded by bibliographical details and appendices.

The time range covered by this study extends from the Late Predynastic period to the end of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty (ca. 664-525). Following the latter date there were several invasions of Egypt, for example by the Persians and later by the Greeks and Romans. The influence of these various cultures was to cause significant changes in the form and appearance of Egyptian clothing. They have therefore been deliberately excluded from the present study about Pharaonic Egyptian clothing.

Another aspect which has been deliberately left out of this study is the ancient nomenclature for the various items of apparel. This area of research has been excluded for two reasons; firstly, I wish to present a study which is primarily based on the surviving objects and their construction, rather than a more traditional, philological approach. Secondly, an initial survey of the available literature, notably Janssen's study of the cloth prices from Ramesside Egypt, quickly showed how uncertain the current situation is with regards relating actual garments to known Egyptian terms for cloth or clothing.<sup>6</sup> In fact only one garment, the bag-tunic, has so far been satisfactorily linked with an Egyptian word, namely *mss* (Janssen 1975:259-264; Hall 1981a). A detailed study of the ancient Egyptian terminology for cloth and clothing must therefore belong to the future.

<sup>5</sup> For information about how the effect of these garments can be reconstructed, see Vogelsang-Eastwood 1992.

<sup>6</sup> I should especially like to thank J. van Haeringen for her help in this matter.

The works of several authors are referred to throughout this study. These include books by H. Bonnet, *Die ägyptische Tracht bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches* (1917), and E. Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich* (1966); two works by E. Riefstahl, *Patterned Textiles in Pharaonic Egypt* (1944) and "A note on ancient fashions: four early Egyptian dresses in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston", *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* (1970). Finally, mention should be made of the numerous articles and studies by R. Hall.<sup>7</sup> Both Riefstahl and Hall provide valuable information about the construction of garments from various collections. The studies by Bonnet and Staehelin are based on art historical research and tend to be of a more theoretical nature.

In general, the spelling of Egyptian personal names is based on the work of B. Porter and R. L. B. Moss: *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings* (1927-1954). Although the terminology in the *Topographical Bibliography* has sometimes proved unsatisfactory, these volumes are available in most Egyptological libraries and can be consulted with relative ease. In addition, it has meant that a standard, English form of the names could be used. The dynastic dates and reigns attributed to individual kings, and geographical place names are based on those provided by J. Baines and J. Malek in the *Atlas of Ancient Egypt* (1980).

Finally, it should be noted that unless otherwise specified all of the extant garments referred to in this work are made out of linen.

<sup>7</sup> Notably, Hall 1981a; 1981b; 1985; 1986a and 1986b; see also Hall and Pedrini 1984.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LOINCLOTHS

A loincloth is a simple garment, part of which is wrapped around the waist, while the rest is drawn between the legs. It is sometimes called a breech cloth or breech clout. Although discussing a relatively simple garment, the present chapter had to be divided into two sections after it became clear that there are two distinct forms of loincloth. The first is made out of cloth, while the second is of leather. Nevertheless, in both cases the manner in which the garment was worn remains virtually identical. The distinction, apart from the material used, lies in the person who wore the garments and his or her reasons for doing so. Cloth loincloths were used by most of the population of Egypt for virtually all of the Pharaonic period. Leather loincloths, on the other hand, were worn by one group only and for a relatively short period of time.

#### CLOTH LOINCLOTHS

The cloth loincloth, always triangular in form, is one of the few garments worn by men and women alike, throughout most of the Pharaonic period. In spite of this, it is not normally described in modern works about Egyptian clothing. Its existence seems to be totally ignored in favour of its more illustrious relations, namely the various types of outer garment. This omission may be due to the fact that it was a purely functional item worn either by itself or underneath another garment, for instance, a skirt, kilt or bag-tunic.

The list of extant examples given below is intended to give an idea of the date, type and numbers of loincloths found in various excavations, rather than being a complete list of surviving examples. Most of the examples cited date to the New Kingdom.

#### *Surviving Examples of Cloth Loincloths*

Lord Carnarvon and H. Carter published a triangular loincloth found in the coffin of a man which lay in Theban Tomb 37 (pl. 1; Carnarvon and Carter 1912:83, object no. 37:64, pl. LXIX:1). The tomb was dated to the late Middle

Kingdom/ Second Intermediate Period, or slightly later.<sup>1</sup> It is clear from the photograph that the loincloth had a seam down the middle, and was hem-stitched all the way around. The two cords used to fasten the garment were made from a yarn (2-3 mm; S-plyed) which had been knotted to the two top corners of the garment. Interestingly, a long rope belt ("cord belt"; 5-7 mm; Z-plyed) which was knotted and fringed at one end (the other end was obscured in the photograph), was found with it.

At least four examples of triangular loincloths were recorded at the Workmen's Village of Deir el-Medina, near Thebes. The garments were given a New Kingdom date. The items in question are all described by B. Bruyère in his excavation report for 1934-35 (1937, II:60, 64, 173; pls. 31:3 and 33). The first comes from tomb no. 1380, the burial of a woman and child. The loincloth was described by Bruyère as being made of linen and having a seam down the middle (*idem*:60). Few details about the second loincloth can be given as there is only a photograph. The garment appears to have rolled and whipped hems along the long edges, and a seam down the middle (*idem*:64, fig. 33). The third example comes from tomb no. 1379. No further details are available. The last group of loincloths come from the burial of a man (Tomb 1382; *idem*: 186). According to Bruyère there was "un pagne rectangulaire et un pagne triangulaire pliés sur les cuisses avec lesquels le mort était probablement habillé pour arriver jusqu'à la tombe" (*idem*:186). Unfortunately, no further details were given about the loincloths. Reference was made, however to a length of fine cloth which may have been a kilt.

Over fifty triangular loincloths were found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun.<sup>2</sup> They were found both singly and in groups of up to twelve. A typical example now on display in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, shows how these garments were constructed (pl. 2: EM JE 758). The example in question was made from two pieces of cloth sewn together, the seam coming down the middle of the garment. The top was neatened using a hem, while the sides were rolled and whipped.

<sup>1</sup> The tomb lies beneath the foundations of the valley temple of Queen Hatshepsut. The cemetery, and consequently the tomb, was given a late Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period date. This would mean that the example is the earliest surviving Egyptian loincloth known to date. However, since the tomb was reused at a later time, Carnarvon and Carter felt that the coffin, plus contents, should be given a somewhat later, New Kingdom date. The date was based on the shape of the coffin, namely, a wooden coffin of a "plain rectangular gable-topped" type (Carnarvon and Carter 1912:83, object 64).

<sup>2</sup> About twenty objects described as "apron loincloths" were also recorded in the tomb. See Chapter Nine for a further discussion of these pieces.



In 1906 E. Schiaparelli found about fifty triangular loincloths within the intact, fifteenth century B.C. tomb of Kha (Schiaparelli 1927:92-93, figs. 62, 64). Most of the loincloths had been neatly folded and many have so-called laundry or owner's marks clearly visible in the top left and right hand corners (pls. 3a-b). Schiaparelli noted that seven of the loincloths were wrapped around their own "shirts" (namely bag-tunics), and it would seem likely that this combination or set represented the everyday apparel of many Egyptians.<sup>3</sup> Again, a typical example of one of Kha's triangular loincloths was made with an overlap seam down the middle, a hem across the top and a rolled and whipped hem down the two long sides (Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 62).

Although no complete example of a cloth loincloth was found at the New Kingdom Workmen's Village at Amarna (ca. 1375 B.C.), numerous fragments were recorded (Vogelsang-Eastwood, in press). These include sections from the top, middle (with centre seam), and points of the loincloth. The top segments have hems, while the diagonal side seams are rolled and whip stitched.

#### *Construction of a Cloth Loincloth*

After studying various surviving examples of this garment type, it is clear that the basic construction of the cloth loincloths is simple. It is made out of

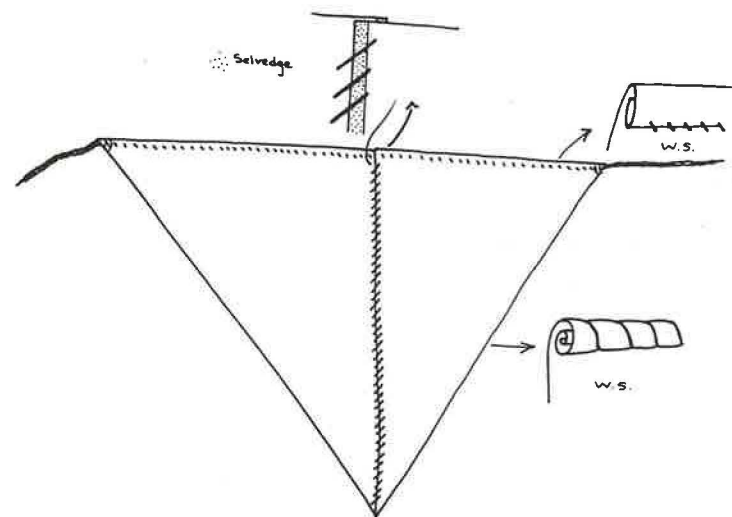


Fig. 2:1 Construction of a typical cloth loincloth

<sup>3</sup> Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 65. See Chapter Eight for a discussion about the bag-tunics.

two triangular shaped pieces of cloth sewn together down the centre of the garment (fig. 2:1).

Generally, the central seam was made from two selvedges which overlapped each other and were then overcast (whip stitch). The top of the cloths was neatened using a simple hem, while the diagonal sides were finished using either a rolled and whipped hem or very occasionally a simple hem (see the example found by Carnarvon and Carter referred to previously). In most cases the side hems meet at the point of the loincloth. There are examples, however, where they do not meet. In Plate 4, for instance, a loincloth is illustrated which has the left-hand hem finishing about 1.5 cm above the point (ROM T.62; unknown provenance). This is probably due to the skill, or more likely the lack of it, of the person who cut out and stitched the garment, rather than indicating a different method of construction.

The cloth loincloth normally has two strings at the junction between the hem and the rolled hem. These were used to fasten the garment around the waist. Sometimes the strings were knotted onto the loincloth, but in other cases they were formed by an extension of the simple hem loosely wrapped around with a piece of string.

The shape of the loincloth may vary slightly. For instance, those found at Amarna have flat tops, while some of the examples from Tut'ankhamun's tomb show curved tops, comparable to those from the near-contemporary tomb of Kha (Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 64). Nevertheless, the basic method of construction remains the same.



Fig. 2:2 Man wearing a cloth loincloth left open at the front (mastaba of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Wild 1953, pl. CXIII)



The principal difference, however, between the triangular loincloths found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun and those from the Workmen's Village, Amarna, lies in the quality of cloth used and the fineness of stitching. For example, the cloth used for one of Tut'ankhamun's loincloths is almost silk-like in appearance. The central seam is only 0.2 cm wide with fine stitching. On the other hand, the cloth used for the workmen's garments is, not surprisingly, strong and sturdy; the central seams tend to be 0.5 cm wide with relatively crude stitching. Such a detail reflects both the various qualities of material used and the type of needles available.

#### *Depictions of Cloth Loincloths*

Representations of loincloths can be found from the Old Kingdom onwards, but it is likely that the type of garment dates back to even earlier times. Although worn by both men and women, it would seem from various representations that it was more commonly used by men.

Throughout the Pharaonic period there appear to be several ways of wearing a loincloth, notably:

(a) They were simply tied around the waist and left open at the front (see for instance, a man herding sheep in the Old Kingdom mastaba of Ti, Saqqara (fig. 2:2; Wild 1953, pl. CXIII);

(b) They were worn with the flap on the inside of the garment: see, for example, the workmen in the fifteenth century B.C. tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes (fig. 2:3; Davies 1943, pl. XLV). This was apparently the most

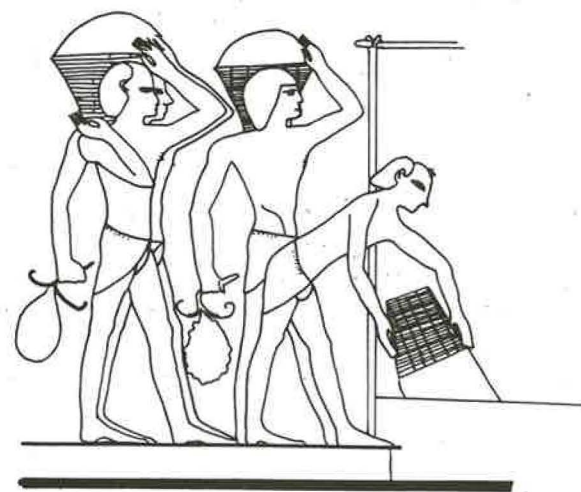


Fig. 2:3 Group of men wearing cloth loincloths tucked in at the front (18th Dynasty; tomb of Rekhmire; after Davies 1943, pl. XLV)

common way of wearing the garment. In some cases the waist band went around the wearer's waist, in other examples it went around the hip. This, however, seems to be a personal or perhaps an artistic detail rather than reflecting fashions or the occupation of the wearer;

(c) A second piece of cloth appears to be fastened from the front to the back of the garment (fig. 2:4). There are two possible explanations for this effect: firstly the garment was folded over the top and the excess material was re-passed between the legs and tucked into the back of the loincloth. Secondly, and more likely, the extra material is a sash whose ends were passed between the legs and tucked into the back of the loincloth. The wearing of a sash with a triangular loincloth can be seen in a relief depicting men making mud bricks from the tomb of Rekhmire mentioned above (*idem*, pl. LVIII).

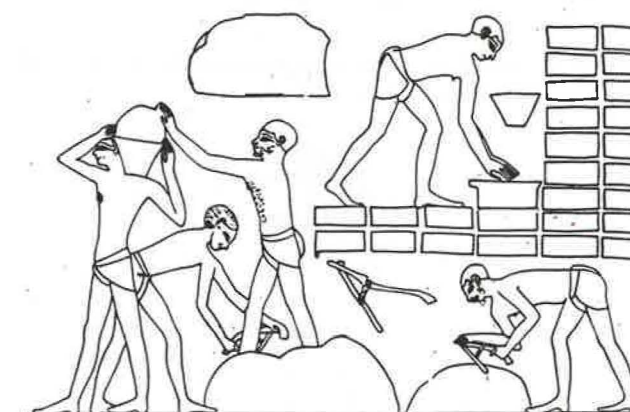


Fig. 2:4 Group of brickmakers wearing closed cloth loincloths and sashes (tomb of Rekhmire, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pl. LVIII)

In addition to wearing the cloth loincloth by itself or with a sash, it was often worn with other garments. In the tomb of Horemheb, for instance, there are several relevant depictions, namely, those of a negress dancer who wears a simple loincloth underneath a skirt of some kind and the figure of a man bringing tribute from the desert, who wears a loincloth, kilt and sash (figs. 2:5-6).<sup>4</sup>

As far as I know only plain loincloths have been found to date, but examples in red, as well as striped forms are illustrated in a number of tombs (see for example, Tomb 17, Beni Hasan). It would appear from these

<sup>4</sup> Davies 1936, I, pls. XL, XXXVIII; Brack and Brack 1980, Taf. 47, 86-87.



Fig. 2:5 Negress dancer wearing a cloth loincloth underneath a short skirt (tomb of Horemheb, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1936, I, pl. XL)

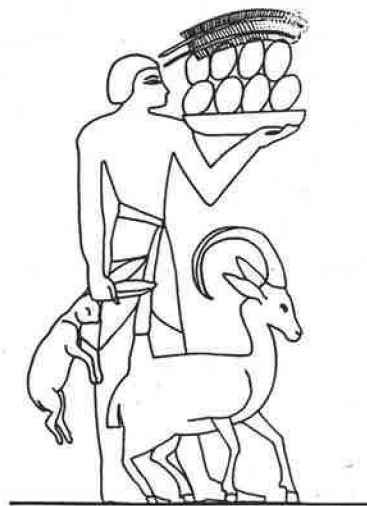


Fig. 2:6 Servant wearing a kilt and sash over a cloth loincloth (tomb of Horemheb, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1936, I, pl. XXXVIII)

depictions is that it was not just foreigners, but also Egyptians of various ranks and involved in a variety of occupations who wore coloured and patterned loincloths.

#### LEATHER LOINCLOTHS

One of the more unusual garments in the Pharaonic clothes chest was the leather loincloth which was usually cut in some manner to form a network

of slits. Its use was limited, both chronologically and by gender: it was most popular during the New Kingdom and was only worn by men. In general, the garment seems to have been intended to protect the owner and his linen loincloth from hard wear, its decorative value was secondary. Not surprisingly, therefore, it was commonly worn by soldiers, sailors, craftsmen and servants. Nevertheless, such garments were also found in the tombs of pharaohs and high court officials, as well as in those of Nubian mercenaries. Indeed, as will be discussed below, the leather loincloth would appear to be one of the few types of garment which spread northwards from Nubia to Egypt, rather than vice versa.

#### *Surviving Examples of Leather Loincloths*

Three unfinished items which have been described as "aprons" of soft leather were found in a New Kingdom tomb at 'Asasif, near Thebes (tomb 839; Hayes 1953, I:240). They are coloured reddish brown, black and green respectively (pl. 5).<sup>5</sup> It is not clear from the appearance of these objects, whether they are actually unfinished or whether the original intention was that they were solid forms of loincloths of some kind. The shape of these items in comparison with those described below would suggest the latter rather than the former. But their present condition makes it difficult to be absolutely certain on this point.

The most widely published leather loincloths come from the mid-fifteenth century B.C. tomb of Mahirper (Maiherperi). The tomb was excavated by H. Carter in 1902 (Carter 1903:46-47). They were found together in a painted box bearing the name of Mahirper (now Boston 03.1036a-b). One of the loincloths went to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (pl. 6), the other to the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago (pl. 7).<sup>6</sup> According to W. S. Smith, the Boston example was made out of gazelle skin, with "stains of wear", which suggest that it was not made specifically for the tomb.<sup>7</sup> In addition, Carter noted that they had been finely mended.<sup>8</sup> This detail has been taken to indicate that they were used in real life. However, the 'mends' consist of extra pieces of skin which were added to the garment, probably when it was being made, in order to produce the correct shape

<sup>5</sup> The green "apron" is in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, no. 31.3.73. The reddish brown and black examples are now in the American Museum of Natural History, New York, nos. 95/2406-9.

<sup>6</sup> Boston 03.1035. The Field example has since been lost.

<sup>7</sup> Smith 1952:113,116, fig. 71-72. As far as I am aware these marks have not been analysed so the exact cause of the stains cannot be specified.

<sup>8</sup> Carter 1903:47. Carter referred to the loincloths as "corslets" (Carter 1903:6).



and size. So some care is warranted as regards the suggestion that they had been used in daily life. They may in fact represent a costly, and unused, gift given to Mahirper, rather than items worn on a daily basis.

A large quantity of leather clothing, including objects described as loincloths, was found at the site of Balabish by G. A. Wainwright (1920:28-29). The site lies on the opposite side of the Nile to Abydos. It contains a number of New Kingdom and later graves, including several shallow, oval grave pits or Pan-graves which may have belonged to Nubian mercenaries.<sup>9</sup> Leather fragments were often found over or around the hip region of the skeletons (*idem*:28-29). Wainwright described these finds as "protective kilts of slit leather", but it is clear from his description that they were in fact loincloths (pls. 8-9; *idem*:29). Two types of loincloth are recorded: (a) undecorated leather forms, sometimes with traces of animal hair; and (b) pierced leather examples (both of these forms will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter). It is also worth noting that Petrie recorded that leather work was common in the Pan-graves at nearby Diospolis Parva (Petrie 1901:51). No further details, however, are currently available.

A similarly cut leather loincloth to the example mentioned above from Balabish was found in 1918-19 in the lower Asasif valley by a team from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc. no. 19.3.165; museum accession card). The loincloth was found in Burial 6A.X.B27 (field number 7A 1174). According to W.C. Hayes the leather work is of a Hyksos date (Hayes 1959, II, 19). The loincloth was found with a boomerang in what Hayes described as a typical Seventeenth Dynasty *rishi* coffin (*ibid.*). If this date is correct then it is the earliest known example of this type of leather loincloth. There is no indication, however, that this form of garment originated in a region other than Nubia. Indeed Hayes compared the Asasif example with the cut-work leather loincloth from Balabish described above (*ibid.*). The way in which the leather was cut, however, would suggest that the Metropolitan example was of an Egyptian origin. It may even be the precursor of the other leather loincloths described in this section.

Recently, the remains of a burnt leather mesh, similar to that used for leather loincloths, has been found at the New Kingdom site of Deir el-Ballas (Lacovara 1990:7,23, fig. 2.3e). The fragments were found in House E, room 5a. The site lies in Middle Egypt, but one detail which is remarkable is the quantity of Nubian pottery found at the site. The discovery of pierced leather work plus Nubian pottery again stresses the connection between leather loincloths and Nubian influence or the presence of Nubians.

<sup>9</sup> For a brief discussion concerning Pan-graves and Nubian mercenaries, see Adams 1977:215.

W. Flinders Petrie illustrated a leather loincloth in his book on the arts and crafts of ancient Egypt (Petrie 1909:150-151, fig. 140). It has a trellis work of large-scale diamonds cut into it, and the remains of a rectangle which went over the buttocks. Above and below the patch are lines of twisted strips. According to the list at the beginning of Petrie's book, the loincloth came from the tomb of Tuthmosis IV (ca. 1401-1391 B.C.) and is housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (*idem*:xvi). However, there is no mention of this item in the catalogue of objects now in the museum which derived from this tomb (Carter and Newberry 1904). Nevertheless, there is a vague reference at the end of the leather chapter to "Thirty-one miscellaneous pieces of harness, trappings, sandals, leather bindings, etc." (*idem*:38). It is possible that the loincloth was one of these items, but this cannot be confirmed at present as no further details are available. W. von Bissing also mentioned the remains of a leather garment, probably a loincloth, in the collection of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (von Bissing 1907:183). According to von Bissing there is "darunter ein seit langer Zeit im Museum befindliches" example (*idem*:183). It is feasible that this is the loincloth from the tomb of Tuthmosis described by Petrie, but this identification is by no means certain as von Bissing gave no further details, nor did he illustrate the garment in question.<sup>10</sup>

The remains of two leather loincloths are housed in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM 910.105 1,2; pl. 10). They came to the Museum in 1910 as part of a collection of Egyptian items bought by C. T. Currelly. Many of these objects derive from Deir el-Bahri, and it is likely that the two loincloths also came from there. Nevertheless, there is no direct evidence for this provenance. Both of the loincloths have been made out of soft leather which has been stained red, probably with ochre. They are patterned with a network of small diamonds. One of the pieces (1) has a single rectangular patch above which there are twisted strips of leather. There is no evidence of the pieces being mended.

Some word should be said at this point about two leather loincloths now in the British Museum, London. The first item (BM 2564) measures 34.0 x 27.0 cm and has a mesh size of 0.6 cm (pl. 11). The curious detail about this loincloth is that for some reason one corner is attached to an ivory bracelet. The loincloth came to the Museum following the sale of the Henry Salt Collection in 1835 (Sotheby Sale Catalogue, 29th June 1835, London, 76, lot 930). It was described in the catalogue as being the "cap of a boy" acquired in Thebes. No further details are known about the origin of this piece.

<sup>10</sup> Von Bissing also referred to an example of a leather loincloth in Florence, but so far I have been unable to trace this item (von Bissing 1907:183).



The second leather loincloth in the British Museum is without parallel (BM 21999). It is small (24.0 x 26.0 cm) and has a mesh size of 1.0 cm (pl. 12). According to the accession records, the Museum acquired the object from the Rev. G. J. Chester in 1886. No further details were given, so the loincloth must be regarded as unprovenanced. I originally thought that it might have been some sort of offering, following the same idea as the miniature bag-tunics dedicated to Hathor (for example, BM 43071; see pp. 143-144). However, attached to the top of the loincloth there are three beads coloured light, dark and light blue, which are threaded on three leather thongs. The use of beads in this colour combination later became associated in Egypt with protecting the very young from the Evil Eye. It would seem a possibility, therefore, that this garment was actually made for a baby or young child and that the beads were regarded as some form of amulet.

Finally, reference should be made to two more loincloths, both unprovenanced, which are in a German and a British collection respectively. The first example to be discussed is a fragment of a leather loincloth now in the Museum Alter Plastik, Frankfurt, which von Bissing claimed derived from Akhmim, Middle Egypt (pl. 13).<sup>11</sup> Only the central section of the garment remains, including the top and bottom bands and part of the 'buttock patch'. There is no evidence of colouring. The remains of another leather loincloth are now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (acc. no. 1882.15). Its provenance is unknown. Only part of the waistband and main netting survives (pl. 14). There is no evidence to suggest that this piece was coloured.

In addition to the leather garments found in Egyptian contexts, a number of similar items have been found in Nubian graves, especially of the late C-group period.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, skin or leather garments would appear to have been the main form of male and female clothing for the C-group people (Adams 1977:152). It is not surprising, therefore, to find large quantities of leather in graves from this period. Leather garments, for example, were found at Kerma, which lies just above the third cataract (Reisner 1923, IV-V:303-312). There is some question as to whether these items were part of male or female clothing.<sup>13</sup> This point was raised because a number of the leather fragments were found in women's graves (*idem*:304-305). Neverthe-

<sup>11</sup> Museum Alter Plastik, Frankfurt, acc. no. 2652. Von Bissing 1907:183.

<sup>12</sup> According to W. Adams the appearance of the C-group period or C-horizon coincided with the Sixth Dynasty in Egypt (Adams 1977:143). It lasted for approximately one thousand years (*idem*:145).

<sup>13</sup> In general, leather garments were a uni-sex garment in Nubia and further south, while they were purely male in Egypt proper. See Reisner 1923, IV-V, 304.

less, as several leather garments were found around the hips of male skeletons it may be presumed that the pieces from these particular graves were loincloths of some kind.

Similar garments were also found in the C-group graves in the Adindan cemeteries, just below the second cataract (Williams 1983:65, T8 and T121). The most interesting finds derive from tombs 8 and 121 and include pierced "mesh" garments, which B. Williams compared to those published by Wainwright from the Egyptian site of Balabish mentioned previously (*idem*:71).

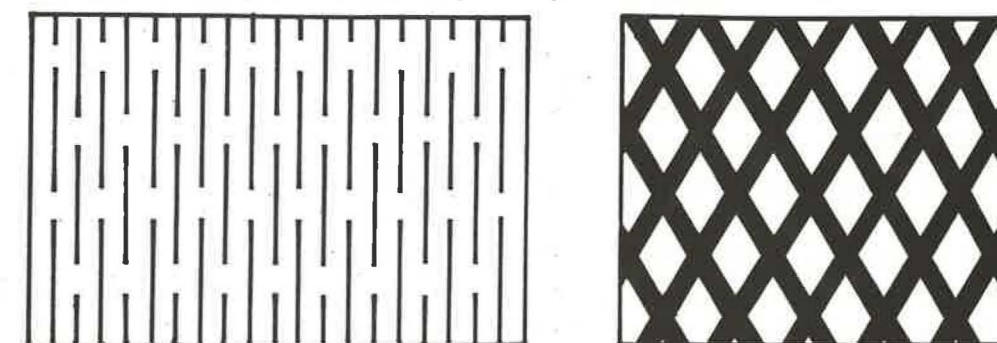


Fig. 2:7 System of staggered slits used for leather loincloths. (a) system of slits; (b) open mesh

#### Construction of Leather Loincloths

All of the complete leather garments were made out of one piece of soft hide, usually identified as gazelle skin. They have a wide leather band across the top and around the edges. This band was not cut into. The mesh was created by cutting rows of small, staggered slits into the leather and then pulling the leather out (fig. 2:7). An uncut patch was left in the top centre of the leather to act as a protective region over the buttocks. In some cases the buttock patch is horizontally placed. Other examples, such as those from Frankfurt and London, have vertically situated patches. In addition, one of the examples in the British Museum (BM 2564) is slightly different because the short edge of the patch is attached via a bridge of leather to the waistband of the garment (see pl. 11).

Above the patches there is usually a line of strips which were twisted in such a way that the top of the strips twists anti-clockwise (s-spun) and the lower half clockwise (z-spun; pl. 15). Between the two sections there is a finger-width gap. The twist was probably set using water. The ties used for fastening the garment around the waist were part of the garment, rather than being separately made and later attached as done with linen loincloths.



Another method of strengthening at the beginning of the net and around the patch can be seen on the examples now in Frankfurt and Oxford (pl. 16). Instead of being split to the band it has small projecting rectangles which are about 2 cm long. The base of these rectangles is split and forms the start of the net. The two loincloths now in the British Museum have also been made using this technique. However, the small loincloth (BM 21999) has a series of small triangles along the bottom of the mesh from which spring eight strands of leather. There are at least ten of these triangles, with at least eighty strands in total.

The fact that several different methods of making such garments can be identified is of great interest, as it would imply that there were at least two, probably more centres or traditions of production. Unfortunately, the Frankfurt, Oxford and London examples are all unprovenanced, so this point cannot be pursued at present.

So far, four different types of leather loincloths have been identified, all of which appear to be contemporary:

(a) the loincloth is made by simply cutting to shape an animal skin with or without the hair still attached. Garments of this type have been found in Pan-graves at Balabish (see pl. 8; Wainwright 1920:28-29);

(b) the loincloth is made of cut-work: isolated holes were cut or punched into the leather in order to form a simple, decorative pattern (see below), for example, the leather garments found by Wainwright in Pan Grave B213, at Balabish (see pl. 9).<sup>14</sup> In the middle section of the garment, there are eight intermittent rows of slits in groups of three. Another example from B213 had thirteen continuous and eight intermittent rows. An Egyptian example of this type of work was found at 'Asasif (MMA 19.3.165) and has continuous rows of tiny slits set in straight lines. The slits are parallel to each other rather than being cut on a diagonal line.

(c) the loincloth features slit-work whereby slits are cut into the leather. Two types of slit work have been identified:

(c.i) short slits were cut into the leather in a series of staggered rows.

See for example, one of the loincloths from near the tomb of Mahirper, now in the Boston Museum of Arts (see pl. 6). Similarly cut loincloths are now in the ROM, Toronto.

<sup>14</sup> Wainwright 1920, pl. X. A more elaborate example of this type of work was found by Reisner at Kerma (Reisner 1923: 305, pl. 65:3). The pattern consists of rows of connecting diamonds divided internally by four lines placed on both diagonals. The ground between the rows of diamonds was patterned with small holes punched at regular intervals (Grave #KXX, body D; Reisner 1923:465,468).

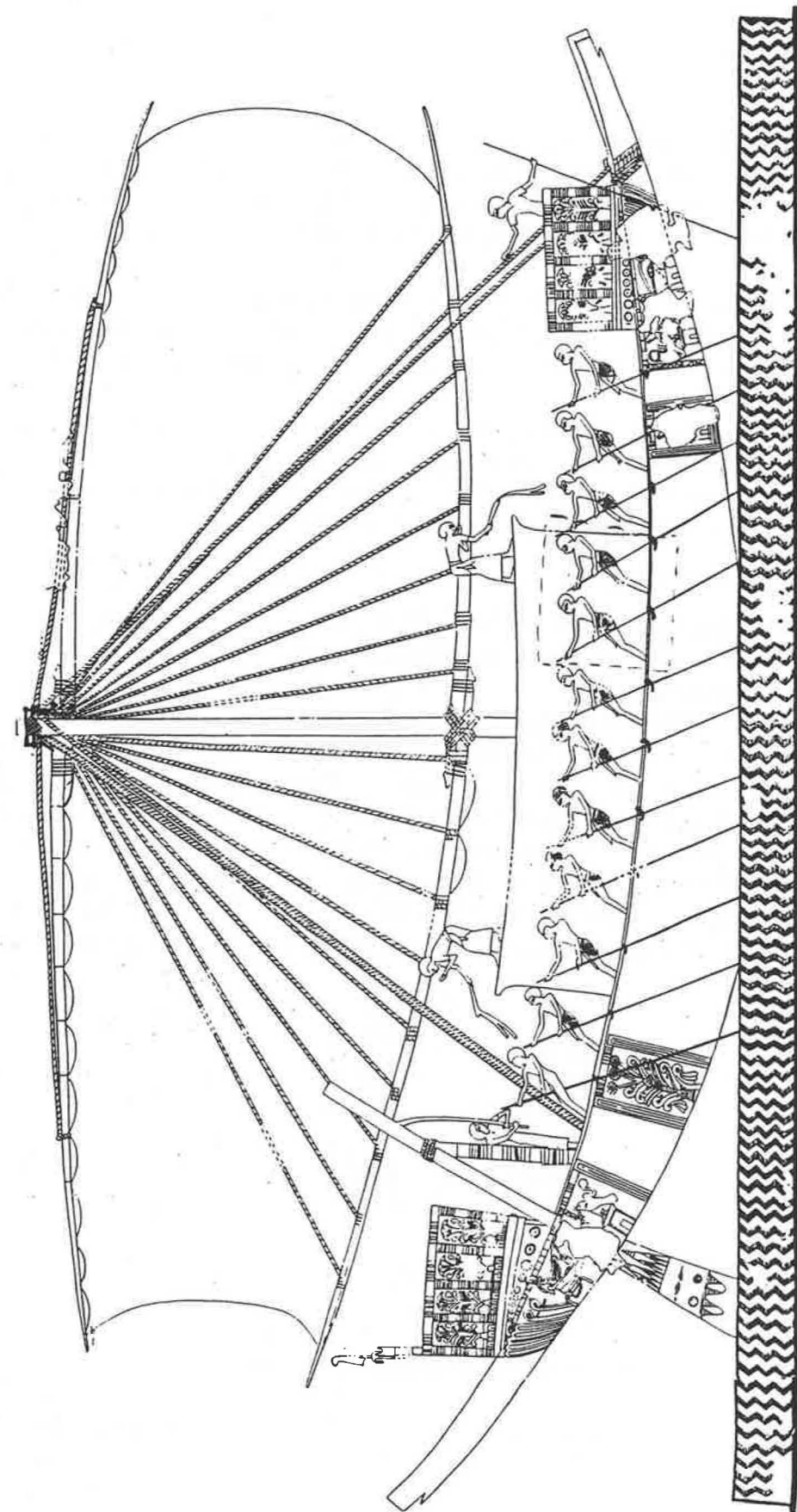


Fig. 2:8 The oarsmen on the boat of Rekhmire wearing leather loincloths (see Fig. 2:11, tomb of Rekhmire, 18th Dynasty, after Davies 1943, pl. LXVIII)



(c.ii) a large, loosely diamond-shaped net was made by slitting the leather into fine strips and then pulling the slits open (see pl. 7). The other loincloth found near the tomb of Mahirper was constructed in this manner, as was the loincloth reputedly from the tomb of Tuthmosis IV.

Although the cuts formed a decorative element, it is likely that they also had a more functional side. By cutting the leather it became more supple; it can be stretched out, as well as allowing air to circulate in order to prevent sweat causing chafing.

Finally, it is worth noting that all four of the types mentioned above can be found illustrated in the various tomb paintings cited below. This detail would suggest that the way in which a garment was made was of importance both to how it was used and by whom it was worn.

#### *Depictions of Leather Loincloths*

So far no Old Kingdom representations of men wearing recognisable leather loincloths have been found. It has proved equally difficult to find any Middle Kingdom examples.

By the New Kingdom it becomes comparatively easy to find depictions of leather loincloths. One of the largest group of men wearing such garments can be seen in the tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes (Davies 1943). In fact four different types of leather loincloth can be identified. The relevant scenes include men working in corn and flax fields and in gardens, men making mudbricks, sailors, servants bringing provisions to a temple, and African tribute bearers (Davies 1943, pls. XIX, XXXIX, LVIII-IX, LXVIII). The bearers are depicted wearing loincloth type (a) which is complete with hair,

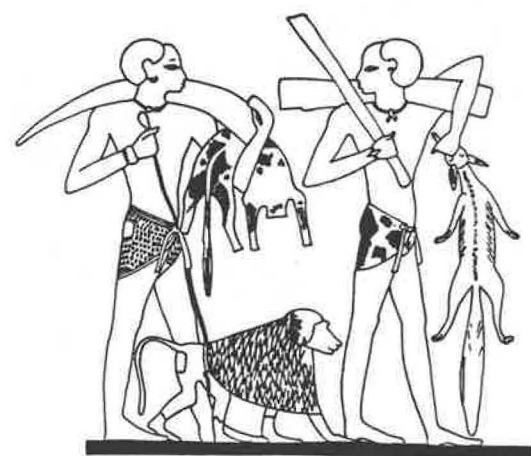


Fig. 2:9 Group of Nubians wearing pierced leather and animal hide loincloths (tomb of Rekhmire, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pl. XIX)

and type (b) which has rows of small slits cut into it (fig. 2:9). Some of the brickmakers, on the other hand, are wearing garments patterned with rows of small isolated slits, which correspond to method (b) (fig. 2:10). The Egyptian labourers and sailors all wear loincloths cut into types (b) and (c.i) as described above. The sailors rowing Rekhmire's boat, for example, are depicted wearing loincloths patterned with small diamonds which correspond to type (c.i), as do the men harvesting flax and wheat (figs. 2:8, 11, 12).

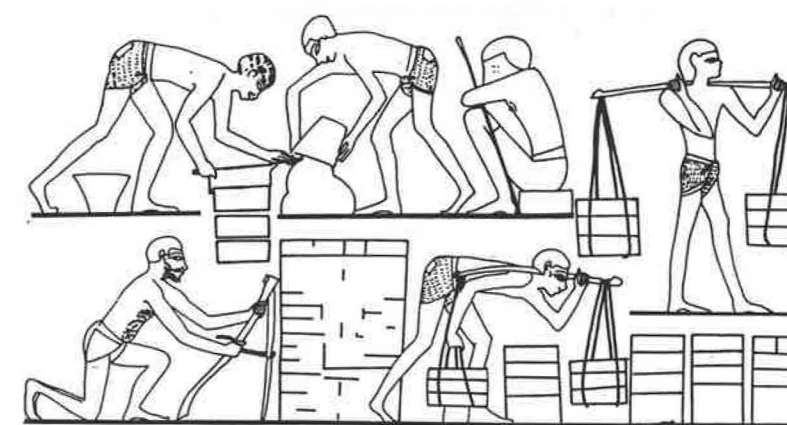


Fig. 2:10 Group of brickmakers wearing leather loincloths with small, pierced work patterning (tomb of Rekhmire, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pls. LVIII-IX)

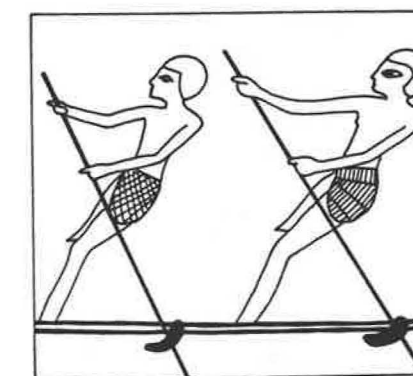


Fig. 2:11 Enlargement of two of the oarsmen showing their different types of leather loincloths (based on fig. 2:8)

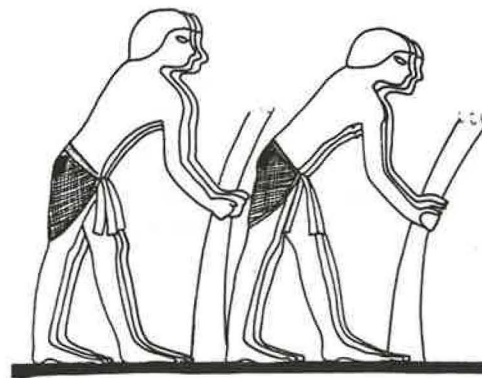


Fig. 2:12 Group of men wearing leather loincloths while harvesting flax (tomb of Rekhmire, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pl. XXXIX)

A fifth type of leather loincloth, for which no actual example has yet been found, is depicted in the tomb of Thanuny, Thebes (fig. 2:13; Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 35:d).

It has between two and four rows of elongated rectangles, which become progressively larger towards the bottom edge of the garment. There is a wide band at the top and around the edges of the garment, plus the characteristic patch over the buttocks. The men are clearly wearing the leather loincloth over a cloth sash or loincloth of some kind. The main feature of the cloth garment is the excess material pulled over the front of the leather loincloth. A similar type of leather loincloth, but with five rows of rectangles, can be seen in the fourteenth century tomb of Huy (fig. 2:14; Davies and Gardiner 1926, pl. XIII). Again, the leather loincloth was worn over a cloth one, and the excess material was pulled over the front of the two garments.



Fig. 2:13 Soldier wearing a leather loincloth over a cloth garment (tomb of Thanuny, 18th Dynasty; after Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 35:d)

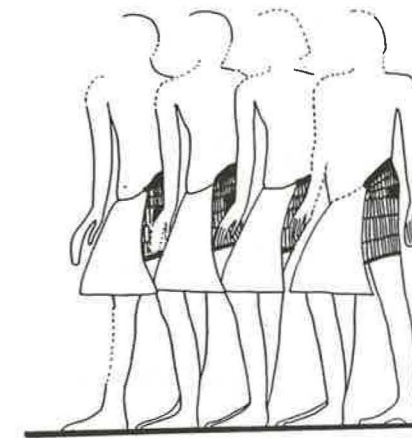


Fig. 2:14 Group of men wearing leather loincloths over a cloth sash or loincloth (tomb of Huy, 18th Dynasty; after Davies and Gardiner 1926, pl. XIII)



Fig. 2:15 Boy wearing a leather loincloth over a cloth garment (tomb of Menna, 18th Dynasty; after Wilkinson 1979, no. 46)

Finally, it should be noted that occasionally young boys are depicted wearing leather loincloths. One such boy can be found in the tomb of Menna mentioned previously (Wilkinson 1979:42-43, no. 46). In the harvest scene, there is a boy holding a young goat while herding a donkey. He is wearing a leather loincloth over a cloth one (fig. 2:15). The leather loincloth is made up of three small honeycombs followed by a large one. It is similar to the fifth type of leather loincloth described previously. The depiction of this garment strengthens the hypothesis that the small loincloth now in the British Museum described earlier, was actually cut for a young child, presumably male.

It would appear from New Kingdom depictions that although leather loincloths were worn by men carrying out a wide range of occupations, they were most commonly part of soldiers' apparel. For example, rows of



men about to be recruited into the army are depicted in the fifteenth/fourteenth century tomb of Userhat (Beinlich-Seeber and Shedid 1987, pl.18:e). The majority of these figures are wearing leather garments (type c.ii). One of the most famous depictions of soldiers wearing leather loin-cloths can be seen in the tomb of Thanuny mentioned above (fig. 2:16; Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 8).



Fig. 2:16 One of a group of soldiers all of whom are wearing leather loin-cloths over a cloth garment. The leather loin-cloth has decorative, feline tails attached at the top and bottom (tomb of Thanuny, 18th Dynasty; after Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 8)

There is a line of soldiers, possibly mercenaries from Nubia. The men wear leather loin-cloths over linen ones, with a "kilt" of cloth hanging over the front of the leather example. The leather loin-cloth was clearly cut into a fine trellis work which corresponds to type (c.ii). Feline tails were fastened to the leather at the top of the garment and to cloth knee garters, although in one case the second tail appears to be attached to the leather at mid-calf height and not to the cloth garter around the knee. Although several authors have compared the soldier's leather loin-cloth to the example in the Boston Museum, the comparison is much closer to the one sent to the Field Museum (see pl. 7).

As these garments clearly differ in appearance and method of cutting, it is possible that one form (b or c.i) was considered more suitable for working in, while type (c.ii), with its large open fretwork appearance was more decorative than functional. This point is highlighted by the fact that two extant examples of type c.ii are associated with a pharaoh (Tuthmosis IV)

and a high member of the court (Mahirper) respectively.

Several different methods of wearing leather loin-cloths can be found in the various depictions. The most common is where the patch of solid leather went over the buttocks. The garment was tied around the waist, with the rounded section drawn up between the legs. This method of wearing the garment (by brickmakers) can be seen in the tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes (see fig. 2:10; Davies 1943, pl. LVIII). Nevertheless, it is likely that they were also worn with the "tail" of the cloth left hanging. Such a method of wearing the garment can also be seen in the same tomb, for example, where the workmen cutting wheat wear their leather loin-cloths drawn up, while next to them the men pulling flax have the garments loose at the back (see fig. 2:12; Davies 1943, pl. XXXIX).

#### Discussion

In the past various suggestions were put forward concerning the primary function of the leather loin-cloth, and the place where this garment originated. For example, G. Maspero suggested that the loin-cloths found by Carter in the tomb of Mahirper may have been of Syrian origin or manufacture (Carter 1903:47). E. Schiaparelli held the view that they may have been worn by priests in the "Ap-ro" or opening of the mouth ceremony.<sup>15</sup> According to G. Jéquier such garments were part of a military costume (Jéquier 1910:173-174). Finally, it was suggested in an anonymous article that the loin-cloths were in fact the *ephod* or vestment worn by the high priest during certain Jewish ceremonies (Anon, 1903; 1904). It is now clear that the usage of leather loin-cloths was restricted, but not to one occupation or social level. A number of more recent authors have indicated that many of the extant garments came from graves which have some Nubian connection. For example, Mahirper, fan bearer to Tuthmosis III, is believed to have been part Nubian (Daressy 1902:60; Nord 1982:176). It has even been suggested that he may have been the son of an African king, who was raised at the Egyptian court (Nord 1982:176). This leads to the question as to whether he received the loin-cloths as a gift, perhaps as part of some Nubian tribute, or whether they were his own property.

It is worth noting that in the rows of foreign tribute bearers in the New Kingdom tomb of Rekhmire mentioned above, the Africans who bring monkeys, baboons, and ivory are wearing two types of skin loin-cloths (types a and d; Davies 1943, pl. XIX). Several of the men have cloths which still retain the original hair patterns (type a). One of the men, however,

<sup>15</sup> Schiaparelli 1881-1890:30. For a discussion concerning the opening of the mouth ceremony see Otto 1960:1-33.



wears a leather loincloth which has rows of small holes (type b) and a patch over the buttocks. It is not really surprising that Rekhmire should have Nubians depicted in his tomb as he was a vizier, and part of his duties was to receive the Nubian tribute. Unfortunately, there is no evidence surviving to show whether leather loincloths once formed part of the funerary equipment placed in Rekhmire's tomb in recognition of his Nubian connections.

Finally, some word should be said about a painted representation of a statue of Amenhotep II (*ca.* 1427-1401 B.C.) in the tomb of Ken-Amun.<sup>16</sup> The pharaoh is depicted in the guise of a Nubian warrior, perhaps to show his authority over that land (fig. 2:17). He is wearing a short loincloth with two lines of characteristic honeycomb forms, which is virtually identical to the loincloths worn by the soldiers

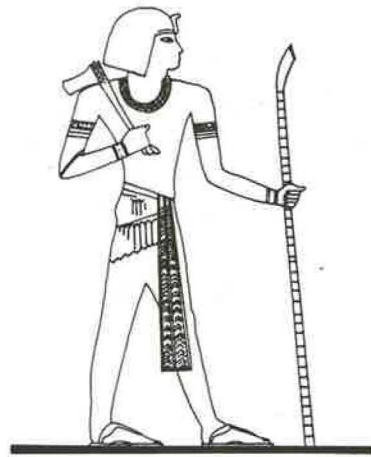


Fig. 2:17 Statue of Amenhotep II as depicted in the tomb of Ken-Amun. The king is shown in the guise of a Nubian warrior complete with leather loincloth (18th Dynasty; after Davies 1930, pl. XVI)

depicted in the tomb of Thanuny (see fig. 2:13). The main difference lies in the garment worn with the loincloth. In the case of the soldiers in the tomb of Thanuny this is replaced by a simple sash with the excess material placed over the front of the leather loincloth. Amenhotep on the other hand is wearing a long, narrow apron decorated with a feather pattern. It would seem, therefore, from this particular representation of Amenhotep, that not only was the leather loincloth regarded by the Egyptians as a typical Nubian garment, but it was also one which was readily associated with soldiers.

<sup>16</sup> Davies 1930; pls. XVI-XVII. A similar statue of Amenhotep II dressed as a Nubian is given in Wreszinski 1923, pl. 29:a.

In conclusion, it would seem that the origins of the leather loincloth lie in Nubia and that it probably arrived in Egypt sometime during the early Middle Kingdom or slightly earlier. The garment was popular during the New Kingdom, but it was only worn by men, including labourers, sailors, soldiers, as well as members of the court with Nubian connections. This detail is substantiated by the fact that to date leather loincloths have only been recorded from male burials, and only depictions of men wearing these garments have been found.

## APRONS

There is some general confusion about the exact nature of an Ancient Egypt apron, since many writers do not differentiate between an apron and a kilt. H. Bonnet, for example, suggested that it was part of the main kilt and was created by elaborately folding one end of the kilt length (fig. 3:1; Bonnet 1917:5-10, Taf. II). This suggestion was followed by a number of authors.

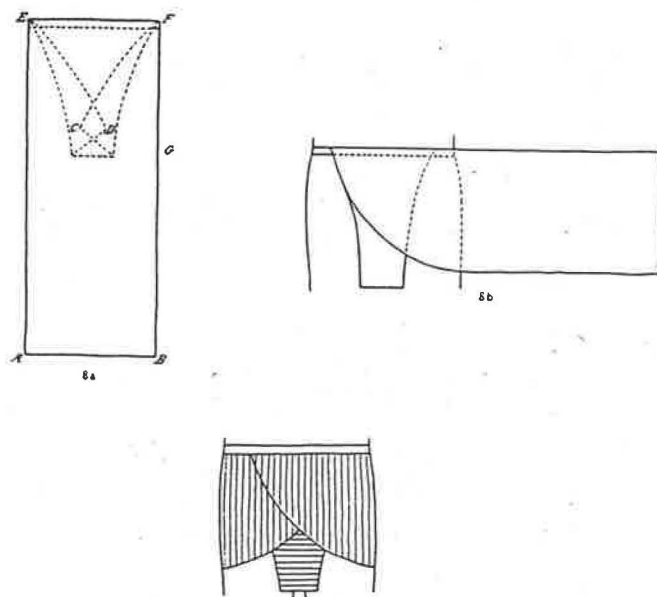


Fig. 3:1 Construction of an Egyptian apron following Bonnet 1917, Taf. II

However, the extant examples from Nubia, plus the information to be discussed below, indicate that the kilt and apron were two separate items. So, for the purpose of this work, an apron is defined as a separate item worn by men, either by itself or over a kilt or some other garment.<sup>1</sup> The basic construction of the apron is simple. It consists of one or more pieces of

<sup>1</sup> For definitions of kilts and skirts, see p. 53.

cloth attached to a belt, sash or band which is fastened around the waist. In general, the apron panel only covers the genital region. Aprons range in form from several strips of cloth bunched together, to simple triangular shapes or elaborately pleated objects which extend from the waist to the ankles. Although generally made of cloth, it is possible that during the New Kingdom examples were made of beadwork, or even metal inlaid with glass paste or semiprecious stones (compare Riefstahl 1944:4-5).

*Surviving Examples of Aprons*

As yet, no Pharaonic Egyptian aprons have been identified. Nevertheless, examples have been found at two sites in Nubia, namely Qasr Ibrim and Gebel Adda.<sup>2</sup> The first-mentioned site yielded several complete and fragmentary examples (E. Crowfoot, pers. comm.). Unfortunately, only a few are securely dated, namely to the Meroitic period (200 B.C. - A.D. 350). Nevertheless, as all of the pieces show many similarities, it can be concluded that they are all of a reasonably similar date.

A single apron was recorded from Gebel Adda (ROM #62; pl. 17). Its provenance is known. It came from a disturbed grave in Cemetery III, a large field of burials in the plain directly east of the main citadel of Gebel Adda. The majority of the graves date to the Meroitic period, including that which contained the apron. The apron was found in grave no. 622.AI, which contained the skeleton of an adult male. The apron was found with the remains of a garment (ROM #62 [i]) which was either a kilt with pointed back, or perhaps a loincloth, and which was embroidered with a pattern similar to that on the apron.<sup>3</sup>

*Construction of Aprons*

The following description of a Meroitic apron is based on the Gebel Adda example. The same method of construction was apparently used for the pieces from Qasr Ibrim. It would, therefore, seem to have been a standard type. The aprons were made out of two panels of shaped cotton sewn together down the middle (fig. 3:2). Each panel consists of two layers of cloth sewn together. The length of the panels is 90 cm. Each panel is made up of three distinct sections:

(a) a semi-circular area (max. width 23.5 cm) with large floral decoration in stem stitch embroidery in light blue cotton;

<sup>2</sup> E. Crowfoot, pers. comm. The Gebel Adda textiles are currently being prepared for publication by G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood and J. van Haeringen.

<sup>3</sup> A complete loincloth was found at Qasr Ibrim which has a similar shaped and embroidered pattern as that on the Gebel Adda "kilt" (E. Crowfoot, pers. comm.).



(b) a long narrow central section (length: 42 cm, width: 20 cm) with a series of fourteen circular medallions worked in chain stitch with dots round each

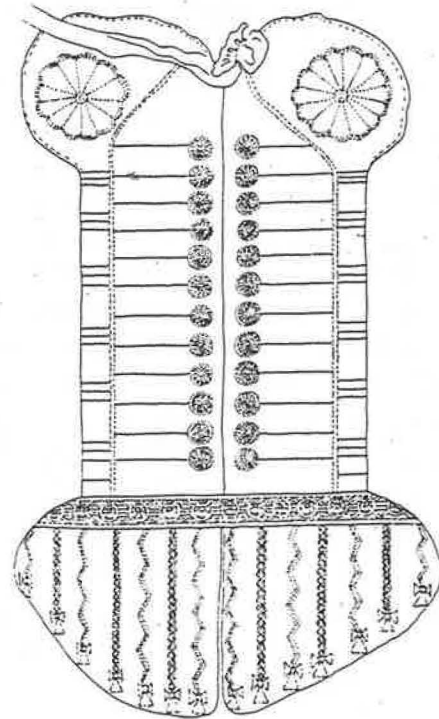


Fig. 3:2 Reconstruction of a Meroitic apron from Gebel Adda, Nubia (ROM # 62)

medallion and lines of stem stitch across to the opposite side of the panel; (c) a rounded triangular shape at the bottom (max. width: 26 cm; length: 26-27 cm) embroidered with the sign of life or *ankh* design within circles across the top and a series of zig-zags alternating with rows of linked diamonds in dark and paler blue cotton, ending in an *ankh* design at the bottom. All of the embroidery has been worked in a Z-plyed cotton thread.

The Gebel Adda apron also shows the remains of a length of cloth attached by a knot to the top of the garment. This would indicate that a sash was used to tie the garment around the waist.

### Depictions of Aprons

As noted by R. Hall, labourers during the Old Kingdom "generally wore only a sash looped around the waist, leaving long flowing ends in front" (Hall 1986a:20). This garment type is frequently met in Old Kingdom depictions and would seem to be a fairly standard form.<sup>4</sup> The origin of this garment appears to lie in men wearing a simple length of cloth as a sash around the waist with two ends hanging down the front (Badawy 1978, fig. 7). Occasionally the ends, plus a loop, were allowed to hang down. Such garments can be seen in the mid-Fifth Dynasty tomb of Anta, Deshasha (fig. 3:3; Petrie 1898, pl. XII).

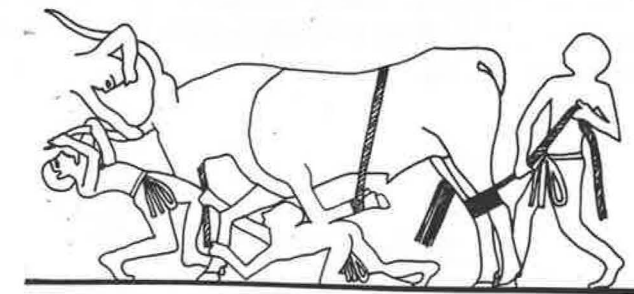


Fig. 3:3 Group of men capturing a bull. The men are wearing a length of cloth wrapped around the hips and fastened at the front (tomb of Anta, 5th Dynasty; after Petrie 1898, pl. XII)

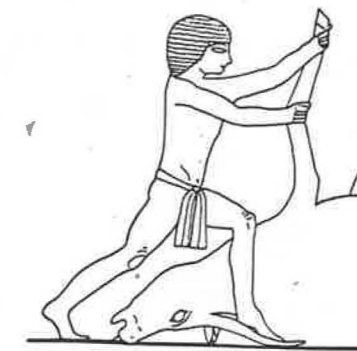


Fig. 3:4 Man slaughtering a bull. He is only wearing one, possibly two lengths of cloth wrapped around the hips and fastened at the front (mastaba of Ti, 5th Dynasty; Wild 1966, pl. CLXIII)

<sup>4</sup> For comments concerning the possible symbolic significance of these straps, see Baines 1975:8-10, 15-1-18.

A slightly more elaborate version of this type of apron consists of several narrow lengths of cloth which were tucked or attached to the front of a sash. In the low building or mastaba covering the burial of Ti at Saqqara, for example, men are shown pulling on ropes and slaughtering bulls (Wild 1966, pl. CLXIII). They are wearing only a belt to which two lengths of cloth are attached (fig. 3:4). The cloth was worn over the genital region. In some cases the cloth straps were tucked up into the belt. It would appear from such depictions that the men wore nothing beneath the aprons. Although two doubled lengths are the most commonly depicted form of this garment, other forms appear to have existed. For example, in the mastaba of Nyhetep-ptah, Giza, the apron consists of only one length of cloth, while in that of 'Ankhm'ahor, Saqqara, three lengths are depicted (figs. 3:5-6; Badawy 1978, figs. 7 and 24). Both mastabas date from the end of the Fifth, beginning of the Sixth Dynasty.

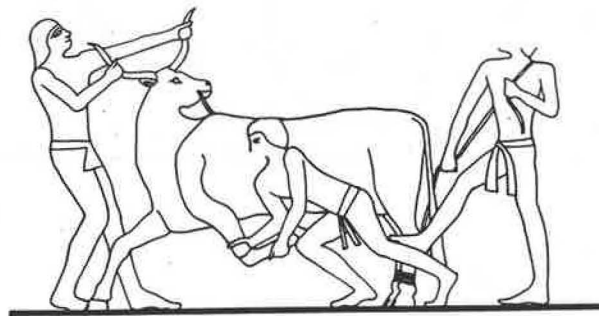


Fig. 3:5 Group of men wearing single lengths of cloth (mastaba of Nyhetep-ptah, 6th Dynasty; after Badawy 1978, fig. 7)

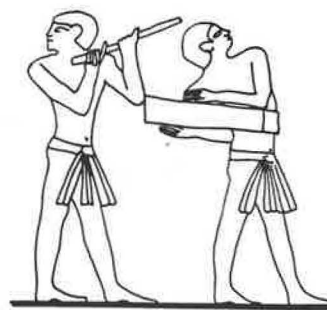


Fig. 3:6 Men wearing three lengths of cloth around their hips (mastaba of 'Akhm'ahor, 6th Dynasty; after Badawy 1978, fig. 24)

A second type of apron is depicted in the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of Antef, at Asasif, Middle Egypt (Jaroš-Deckert 1984, Faltkarten 3). Here an apron is depicted which consists of a narrow rectangular piece of material worn beneath a kilt (fig. 3:7). It should be noted that Antef was probably of Nubian origin (see Fischer 1961). This type of apron, however, is also met



Fig. 3:7 Man wearing a narrow rectangular apron worn underneath a short kilt (tomb of Antef, 11th Dynasty; after Jaroš-Deckert 1984, Faltkarten 3)

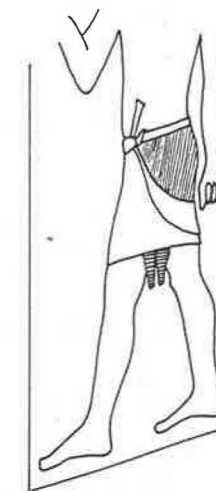


Fig. 3:8 Man wearing a bifurcated apron under a short kilt (tomb of Kha-bauw-sokar, Old Kingdom, after Smith 1946, pl. 36:a)

with in other tomb paintings of more obviously Egyptian origin which date from the Old Kingdom onward. In these paintings the garment varies in shape from triangular to rectangular. Of particular interest is the apron worn under a kilt, depicted in a relief in the Old Kingdom tomb of Kha-bauw-sokar (Smith 1946, pl. 36:a). The man is wearing a short kilt which has pleating down one side over a narrow, pointed apron (fig. 3:8). Two horizontal panels of pleating are clearly indicated. It is likely that this effect was created by folding the cloth in half before pleating it. But it also brings to mind the Meroitic aprons described at the beginning of the chapter which were made from two identical panels. If there is a relationship, two possible explanations can be given: firstly, that the Egyptian aprons were also originally made out of two panels, or secondly, that the origin of the two-panelled Meroitic aprons lies in the two-panel effect created by the method used to pleat the Egyptian aprons. Unfortunately, until actual examples of Egyptian aprons are found, the answer to this problem cannot be given.

Of further interest are two comparable types of garment shown on two different sarcophagi from el-Bersheh (fig. 3:9).<sup>5</sup>

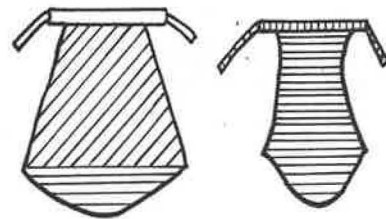


Fig. 3:9 Depictions of two aprons from Middle Kingdom coffins found at el-Bersheh (EM, nos. CCG 28087 and JE 28089, after Lacau 1904, I, pl. XLVIII)

The depictions can be interpreted as showing garments made out of two distinct parts, firstly the main apron which could either be quadrilateral with a rounded lower edge, or an indented rectangle with a much sharper rounded end. Both examples were coloured red and decorated with horizontal and diagonal lines similar to those used to depict pleating. The second section is a narrow strip of cloth fastened along the top of the main panel. In the case of the example from coffin CCG no. 28087, shorter ties were attached to the ends of the top panel. The panels and ties of cloth would have been used to fasten the aprons around the waist. The question

<sup>5</sup> EM CCG nos. 28087 and 28089. Lacau 1904, I, pls. XII, XXIII; vol. II, 7, 22, 69.

remains whether the depiction of the garment with the shorter ties presents an accurate image or not, but if so, it could be argued that this form of garment was actually worn by tucking it into a sash, thus only requiring short ties. As yet no satisfactory evidence is forthcoming on this point.

Finally, there is another garment, on a Middle Kingdom coffin from el-Bersheh which can be compared to the two aprons described above (CCG no. 28084 (39); Lacau 1904, I, pl. XLIX). In this case, however, the apron, plus the two ends of the kilt, are fastened to a narrow strip of cloth with two short ties (fig. 3:10). The garment looks like a ready-made "clip-on" item, (similar in idea to the modern clip-on bow-tie), which could be worn over the front of a loincloth or short kilt of some kind. The problem remains, however, whether this should be regarded as a representational problem or not, and if so the artist may have been depicting the appearance of the whole ensemble. As yet there is no satisfactory answer to this question.

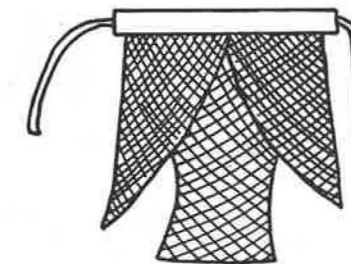


Fig. 3:10 Depiction of an apron and kilt from a Middle Kingdom coffin (EM, no. CCG 28084, after Lacau 1904, I, pl. XLIX)

In general, the range of apron shapes worn during the Old and Middle Kingdom is relatively limited. Most examples are either worn by themselves or under kilts of various types. By the New Kingdom, however, the shapes and forms associated with aprons dramatically widened. In addition to being worn by themselves or underneath other garments, they were now more frequently worn over the top of other garments, notably kilts or sash-kilts (see the following chapter).

The Theban tomb of Menna provides an insight into the different ways of wearing aprons during the New Kingdom (Davies 1936, I, pls. L, LI). In the illustration given in Figure 3:11a-d, which depicts officials and scribes with field workers, four different ways of wearing aprons can be distinguished:



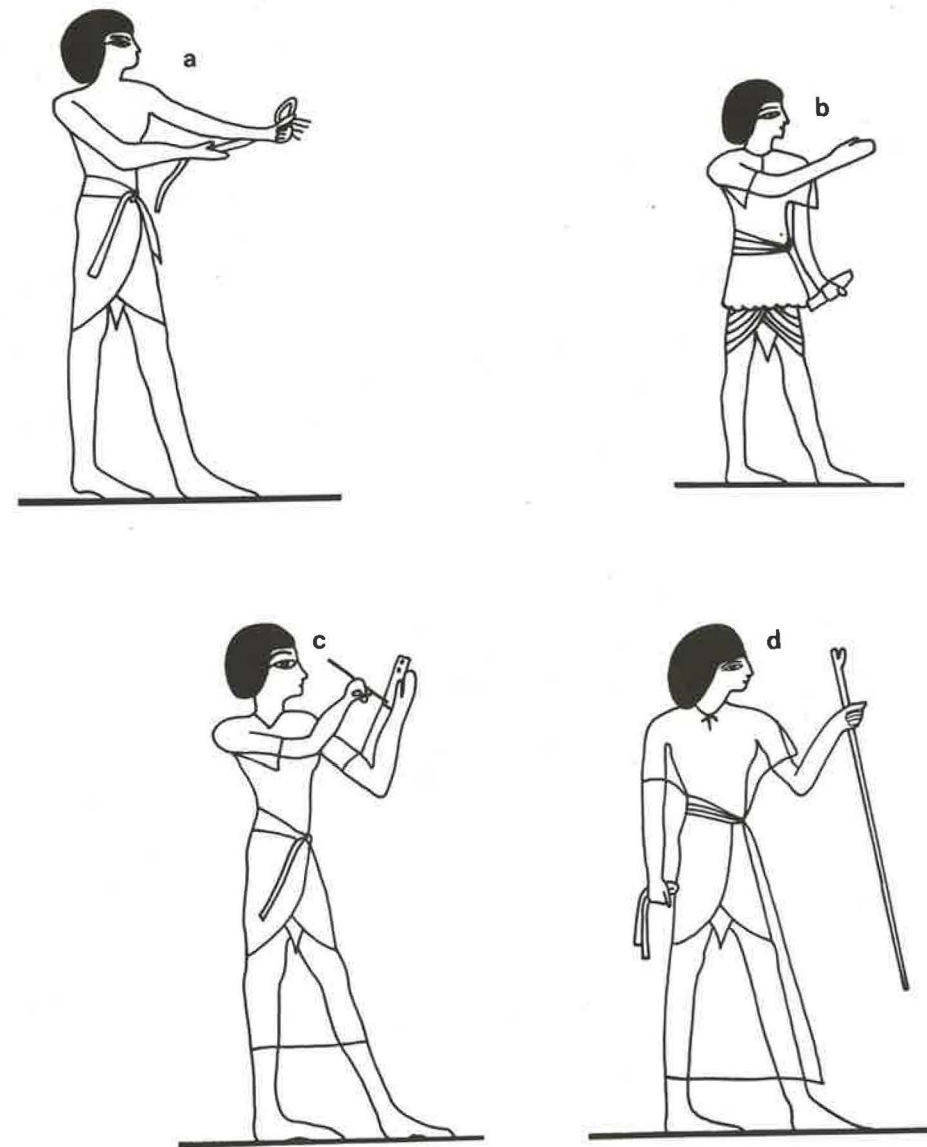


Fig. 3:11 Various male figures in an agricultural scene depicted in the tomb of Menna (18th dynasty, after Davies 1936, I, pls. L-LI):  
 (a) pointed apron worn under a kilt wrapped once around the waist. The two garments are kept in place with a sash of some kind.  
 (b) pointed apron and kilt worn over a half bag-tunic. The three garments are kept in place with a sash.  
 (c) pointed apron, plus kilt, worn underneath a long bag-tunic. The garments are kept in place with a sash.  
 (d) complex arrangement of garments including two different types of kilt and a half bag-tunic. The garments were kept in place by a broad sash.

(a) a pointed apron worn underneath a kilt which went once around the waist. The two garments were kept in place with a sash of some kind;  
 (b) a pointed apron and kilt worn over a half bag-tunic. All of the garments were kept in place with a sash;  
 (c) a pointed apron, plus kilt worn underneath either a long or short bag-tunic. A sash was placed over the three garments;  
 (d) a more complex set of male garments which includes two different types of kilt. Several of the scribes are shown wearing short bag-tunics, kilts with pointed aprons, and elaborately folded "scallop edge" kilts over the top. All of these were held in place with a broad sash of some kind.

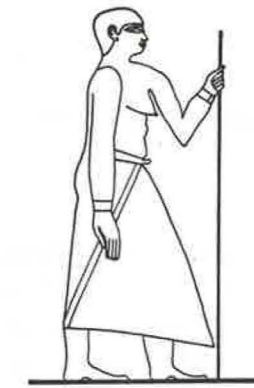


Fig. 3:12 Figure of 'Ankhm'ahor wearing a typical 'triangular' apron and sash (6th Dynasty; after Badawy 1978, fig. 20)

The pointed aprons discussed above, and illustrated by examples from the tomb of Menna, would appear to be a characteristic New Kingdom form. As can be seen, they were sometimes worn only with a kilt, on other occasions the apron and the kilt were worn underneath a long bag-tunic, with the whole kept in place with a belt, or they could be worn over a short bag-tunic. The possible combinations are numerous.

#### *Triangular Aprons*

Some words should be said at this point about the so-called triangular apron which has become a well-known feature of Egyptian costume history. A typical example of the triangular apron as a separate garment, can be seen in Figure 3:12. The drawing is based on a depiction in the Old Kingdom tomb of 'Ankhm'ahor, Saqqara (Badawy 1978, fig. 20). The drawing shows a kilt; a sash around the waist with loop; a double line set



diagonally down the kilt; and a sharply pointed section, often identified with an apron, which juts out well beyond the position of the knees. However, the question remains whether the triangular apron really was a separate garment or formed part of the kilt. The evidence either way is not totally satisfactory. Apart from the example discussed above, the pleated



Fig. 3:13 Figure of Nufer wearing a pleated kilt (tomb of Nufer, 4th/5th Dynasty; after Moussa and Altenmüller 1971, pl. 26)

kilt and "apron" worn by Nufer in the Four/Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Nufer and Kahay would also suggest that they were two separate items (fig. 3:13; Moussa and Altenmüller 1971, pl. 26). Such an hypothesis can be further supported by the following details. Firstly, there is the pleated garment worn by Antef, Giza, whereby the kilt shows vertical pleats while the supposed apron has horizontal lines (Altenmüller 1971, pl. 26). Such an



Fig. 3:14 Figure of Antef wearing a pleated kilt (11th Dynasty; Junker 1943, Abb. 101)



Fig. 3:15 Depiction of 'Ankhm'ahor wearing a triangular apron which appears to rise into the air (mastaba of 'Ankhm'ahor, 6th Dynasty; after Badawy 1978, fig. 23)

hypothesis can be further supported by the following details. Firstly, there is the pleated garment worn by Antef, Giza, whereby the kilt shows vertical pleats while the supposed apron has horizontal lines (fig. 3:14).<sup>6</sup> The direction of the pleats is not consistent with the use of one garment. Secondly, a striking example of the triangular apron shows a garment which rises high into the air (fig. 3:15; mastaba of 'Ankhm'ahor, Badawy 1978, fig. 23). This would again suggest two separate items. Thirdly, in the round statues from the Old Kingdom onward, the triangular apron is de-

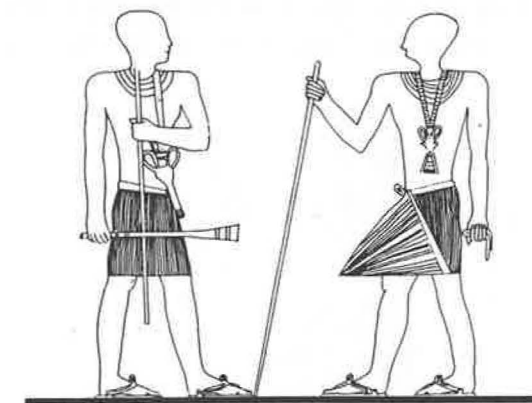


Fig. 3:16 Two facing depictions of Dhehuti-hetep: in the left-hand figure he is wearing a simple kilt, in the right-hand figure he appears to be wearing a kilt plus triangular apron (tomb of Dhehuti-hetep, Old Kingdom, after Newberry 1894, I, pl. XXXIII)

<sup>6</sup> Junker 1943, Abb. 101. See also the pleats in Simpson 1980, pl. 52 (intrusive stele of Weser).

picted as standing away from the main kilt. Finally, in the tomb of Dhehuti-hetep, el-Bersheh, there are two depictions of the tomb owner facing himself (fig. 3:16; Newberry 1894, I, pl. XXXIII). In one representation he is simply wearing a short pleated kilt. In the other depiction, however, he is shown wearing a similar kilt, plus a triangular apron. This could be taken to indicate that the artist regarded the apron as a separate garment.



Fig. 3:17 Depiction of Idu wearing a kilt with horizontal lines, plus sash (mastaba of Idu, 6th Dynasty; after Simpson 1976, fig. 34)

On the other hand, if we are actually dealing with two separate garments, there are some points which need to be explained: firstly, the pleating of the kilt and of the so-called triangular apron worn by the Sixth Dynasty official Idu G 7102) is horizontal, and the single line can be explained as the end of



Fig. 3:18 Depiction of Mena wearing a short kilt with cross-hatching lines (stele, Old Kingdom; after Petrie 1900, II, pl. IIa)



Fig. 3:19 Depiction of Sensebek wearing a kilt with 'pleating' lines which go in various directions (Old Kingdom, BM EA 580)

the cloth (fig. 3:17; Simpson 1976, fig. 34). Similarly, the fold lines on the kilt worn by Mena, Dendara, are horizontal and more or less follow the same line (fig. 3:18; Petrie 1900, II, pl. IIa). The so-called pleat lines on the triangular apron depicted on the Sensebek's stele, now in the British Museum, London, present a problem (fig. 3:19; BMEA 580). The lines are unusual because various directions are followed at the same time. This effect was created by the apron being divided into three roughly triangular sections, possibly for decorative reasons.

Finally, the diagonal double line which is frequently found in association with the triangle is in fact the end of the sash which has been artistically

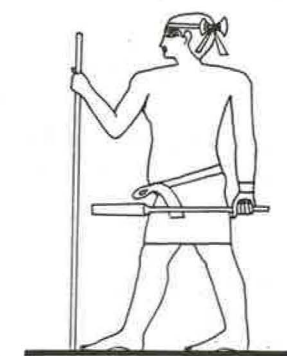


Fig. 3:20 Figure of an official wearing a kilt plus short sash (tomb of Nefery, Giza, Old Kingdom; after Bakr 1951, fig. 37)



arranged and later stylised so that its function is not always obvious to modern eyes. Its origin as a sash can be clearly seen by comparing Figures 3:17 and 3:20 (Bakr 1951, fig. 37). So, if the lines are removed, instead of a triangular apron being worn with a kilt, there remains simply a kilt with a flap of material at the opening which could be arranged in various ways according to the wish of the wearer. For example, in Figure 3:17 Idu is wearing a kilt with the end of the cloth tucked in at the waist. On the other

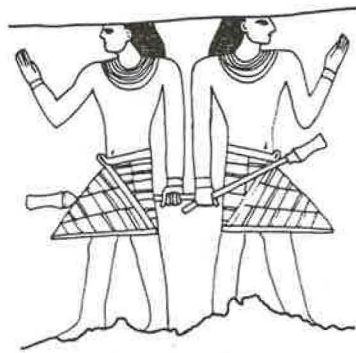


Fig. 3:21 Depiction of Haishtef wearing a kilt with knife-edge fold (mastaba of Haishtef, Old Kingdom; after Saad 1941, fig. 74)

hand, in the mastaba of Haishtef, the tomb owner is shown wearing a kilt with part of the cloth hanging down the front while the excess cloth has been arranged with a knife-edge fold to hang in the form of a triangle (fig. 3:21; Saad 1941, fig. 74). The direction of the cross-hatching confirms the fact that the cloth has been folded. Thus, if a certain degree of standardized exaggeration by the various artists is accepted, then it could be suggested that the so-called triangular apron is in fact part of the man's kilt.

As can be seen from the above, there are arguments for and against the idea of the triangular kilt being a separate item. The general opinion at present is that the triangular kilt was a separate item which went around the hips and was starched with an unspecified substance or "otherwise reinforced so that it protruded in a rigid triangular projection" (Riefstahl 1944:4. See also Schäfer 1986:144). However, I am more and more convinced that the triangular apron was actually the end of a man's kilt which was tucked into the waist band in various ways. But until suitable lengths of cloth from known sources are examined in detail for evidence of wear and crease marks, this point will remain open.

### *Nubian Aprons and 'Codpieces'*

At the beginning of this chapter details were given about an apron found at the site of Gebel Adda, Nubia. It could be argued that this piece should not be included as it dates to the post-Pharaonic period and was found outside of Egypt proper. However, as was shown by H. G. Fischer and briefly



Fig. 3:22 Nubian archer wearing a short red kilt and a green apron (tomb of Set-ka, First Intermediate Period; after Fischer 1961, fig. 5)

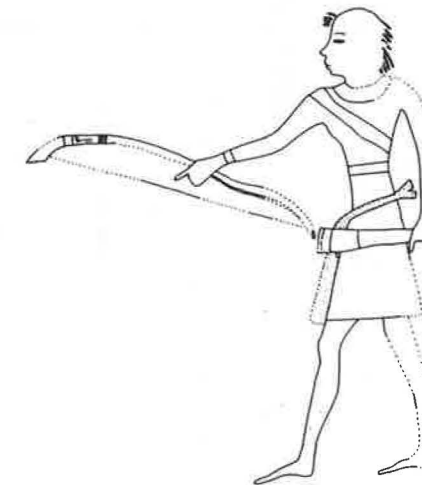


Fig. 3:23 Nubian archer wearing a short red sash and apron, and a white shoulder strap and horizontal band (tomb of Ankhtify, First Intermediate Period; after Fischer 1961, fig. 6)



discussed above, the wearing of separate aprons has a long tradition in Nubia and can be traced back to the Fifth Dynasty in Egyptian representations.<sup>7</sup> It is clear from these depictions that the apron was folded round or attached in some manner to a sash which was fastened at the back.<sup>8</sup> There are two depictions of Nubian mercenaries which are of particular interest. Both date to the First Intermediate period. In the first example from the tomb of Set-ka's at Aswan, a Nubian archer is wearing a short red kilt and sash, with a green apron, and a green shoulder strap attached to a white horizontal band (fig. 3:22; Fischer 1961, fig. 5). In the second example, from the tomb of Ankhtify at Mo'alla, a Nubian wears a red sash and apron, while the shoulder strap and horizontal band are white (fig. 3:23; Vandier 1950, pl. 26; Fischer 1961, fig. 6). The concept of a separate sash with attached pendant is confirmed by finds from both Gebel Adda and Qasr Ibrim mentioned previously.

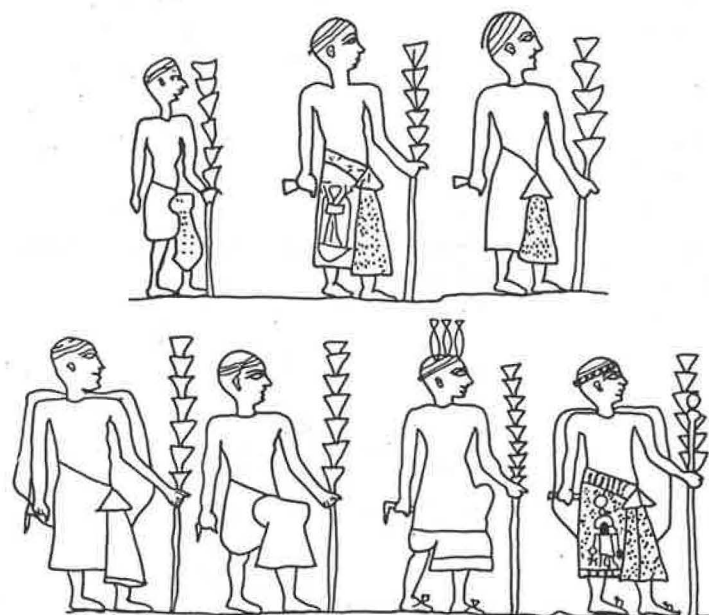


Fig. 3:24 Ethiopian delegates as depicted on the temple at Philae (Meroitic; after Griffiths 1912, II, pl. XVIII)

<sup>7</sup> For a detailed discussion concerning Pharaonic/Nubian aprons, see Fischer 1961:62-74.

<sup>8</sup> Fischer 1961, figs. 5 and 6; Farina 1943:144, fig. 3; Vandier, 1950, fig. 63.

There are several later depictions of Ethiopians, recorded at Philae near Aswan, which show men wearing aprons similar to those found at Qasr Ibrim and Gebel Adda (fig. 3:24; Griffiths 1912, II, pl. XVIII). The combination of actual garments plus representations make it possible to reconstruct how these aprons were worn (fig. 3:25).<sup>9</sup> There is some question, however, as to whether the rounded end should be placed at the waist or knees. Some of the depictions from Philae, for example, show a triangular point at the waist. On the other hand, there are also depictions with the rounded end at the waist. Perhaps both methods of wearing the

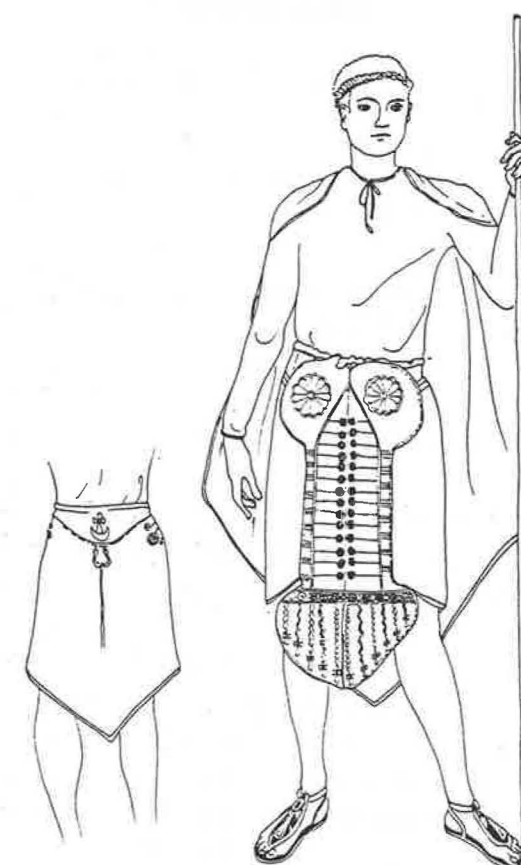


Fig. 3:25 Artist's reconstruction of the garments worn by a Nubian noble during the Meroitic period. The garments are based on finds from Gebel Adda (based on a drawing from the Gebel Adda excavation archives, ROM)

<sup>9</sup> My thanks to N. Millet for allowing me to use this illustration which is based on a drawing made during the excavations.

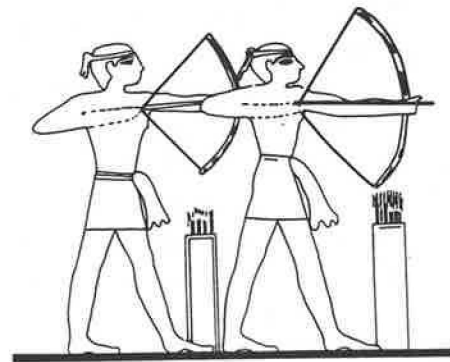


Fig. 3:26 Battle scene from the tomb of Antef. Several of the archers are wearing kilts and possibly penis sheaths (11th Dynasty; after Jaroš-Deckert 1984, Taf. 17)

Meroitic apron were in use, but until more finds are recorded this point will have to remain in question. With respect to the remarks made previously about the triangular apron, it is worth noting that the Meroitic aprons depicted at Philae (see fig. 3:24) are shown as being on a much larger scale than the extant examples. In addition they also appear to be sticking out. It is possible, therefore, as suggested earlier, that the rigid triangular appearance of Egyptian aprons is an artistic convention, and that in reality the triangular apron was a much smaller and less rigid item than we are led to expect from Egyptian representations.

Finally, it has been suggested by H. G. Fischer that there is a relationship between the wearing of a scalloped edge apron during the Middle Kingdom, and men of Nubian extraction.<sup>10</sup> He suggested that a number of men depicted in the battle scenes in the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of Antef, Asasif, were actually Nubian mercenaries and that their aprons were some form of codpiece or sporran which covered the genital region (fig. 3:26).<sup>11</sup> These aprons are separate items tucked into a belt with the material folded in such a way that the effect of scalloping or indenting occurred along the lower edge. Occasionally the apron was painted in a different colour from the short kilt. Again, this would indicate that they were two separate items of clothing.

<sup>10</sup> Fischer 1961:68, fig. 8a. These are the items which Wainwright suggested might have been leather loincloths of some kind.

<sup>11</sup> Jaroš-Deckert 1984, pullout 3. Some of the soldiers wearing these aprons are Nubian mercenaries. Others, however, appear to be Egyptians. See Fischer 1961 for a discussion of these figures.

The use of this type of apron as some form of protective clothing can be seen in the chapel tomb of the Egyptian official Ukh-hotpe's son, Senbi at Meir (fig. 3:27; Blackman 1914, pl. VII). Two men are hunting; both wear a

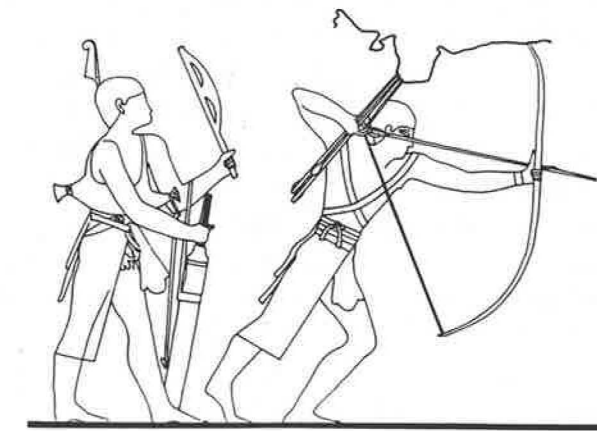


Fig. 3:27 Senbi and attendant wearing penis sheaths and open fronted kilts (tomb of Senbi, Meir, New Kingdom; after Blackman 1914, I, pl. VII)

long kilt made out of a single length of cloth which does not appear to have overlapped at the front, although this point is not clear. The apron of the man on the right was clearly worn underneath the kilt and both garments were kept in place by a sash wrapped at least four times around the waist. The second man (his son?) has a similar sash which was only wrapped once around the waist, but it was also used to keep the apron from hindering the man's movements, by tucking it up into the sash. The folded effect noted above with respect to the aprons depicted in the tomb of Antef can again be seen. In addition, the garment worn by Senbi's attendant appears to include a phallic sheath of some kind.<sup>12</sup> A. M. Blackman described this detail as:

[a] ... survival or substitute for the primitive *karnata*. The penis is inserted into a narrow tube which forms the upper part of the "sporran" and which is tightly tied round the mouth with a string. The tube is passed through the waistbelt so that the penis is caught against the pelvis ... while the wide flap of the "sporran" hanging down offers decent concealment (Blackman 1914, I, 31)

Indeed, the use of this particular form of the apron/codpiece may have been one of the functions of this form of garment, especially as it was worn

<sup>12</sup> Blackman 1914, I, 31; Wreszinski 1923:35; Fischer 1961:68-69; Malaise 1985:218, pl. 1:12. See also comments about penis sheaths by Baines 1975.



by both mercenaries, possibly of Nubian extraction (tomb of Antef), and hunters (tomb of Senbi).

#### *Conclusions*

In view of the type of apron found at Gebel Adda, albeit of a much later date, it would seem likely that the apron was indeed a separate garment which was originally worn either by itself or beneath a kilt. By the New Kingdom, however, the apron had taken on a more decorative nature and was worn in various combinations with kilts, sash-kilts and bag tunics.

The time span between the Old Kingdom and New Kingdom depictions described above, is a clear indication that the wearing of an apron as a separate item has an extremely long history in Egypt. It would also seem to have been regarded as a purely male garment, as no females wearing such items in everyday situations have yet been identified.

As regards the so-called triangular apron, I would like to suggest that this was not a separate garment, but a kilt which was worn and depicted in a particular manner.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### KILTS AND SKIRTS

For the purpose of this study a kilt is defined as a wrap-around garment worn by men, which covers part or all of the lower half of the body. A skirt is a similar garment, but worn by women. In ancient Egypt, both types of garment could vary considerably in both size and form. In some cases it was a simple item which covered the hips while in more extreme forms it went from the chest to the ankles. Although both types were similar in construction, it should be noted that kilts were often more complex and decorative than skirts. The two forms will therefore be discussed separately.

As with certain of the other wrap-around garments discussed in this work, so far no excavated item has been identified which can be categorically described as a kilt or skirt. Consequently, evidence for the construction and the way in which these garments were worn is based on tomb paintings and sculptures. Fortunately, these clothes were one of the most common garments to be worn, so there is abundant information.

#### KILTS

As noted above, a kilt is a simple length of cloth which is wrapped around the waist or hips and covers part or all of the lower half of the body. Depictions of men wearing this type of garment date back as early as the First Dynasty and such objects of apparel seem to represent an essential item in the male wardrobe throughout the Pharaonic period.

Next to the more simple, classical wrap-around kilt, there are two variant shapes which make their appearance during the New Kingdom. These later additions to the male wardrobe may best be described as a sash-kilt and a 'scaloped-edge' kilt respectively. Again, these garments cover the waist to knee region, but the sash-kilt shows converging lines coming from the waist and the knees to a point just below the navel. In addition, there are always one or two lengths of material decoratively draped over the front of the garment. The scaloped-edge kilt is comparable to the sash-kilt, but it is depicted going around the waist of the wearer rather than spreading out from a central spot. Both of these kilts will be described in greater detail later in this chapter.

### Surviving Examples of Kilts

A small number of items described as "kilts" have been found in excavations in Egypt. These pieces, however, are more interesting for what they might have told us if more information had been provided, rather than for what was actually said. For example, a tantalizing glimpse of what may have been kilting was recorded by Petrie in several tombs at Deshasha which date to the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties (Petrie 1898:16). Unfortunately, Petrie only gives brief, cryptic descriptions in his published account of the finds: "mass of kilted stuff 8½ inches deep"; "piece of kilted stuff", or "finely pleated kilt" (*ibid.*). At first glance these details suggest that some form of pleated kilt had been found. Nevertheless, care should be exercised because it is equally likely that Petrie had found groups of pleated dresses of the type well known from Deshasha, which will be discussed in a later chapter.

A possible exception to the above comments are the remains of what may have been a beaded kilt found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (pl. 18).<sup>1</sup> It is patterned with stripes in dark and light beads. The remains of ties were found with it. The apparently small size of the object, plus the presence of ties, would suggest that it was a short kilt. It is also possible that it was originally worn over a linen garment of some kind.

### Depictions of Kilts

It would appear from the visual representations of kilts that the length of these garments vary quite considerably. As with most other garments, the

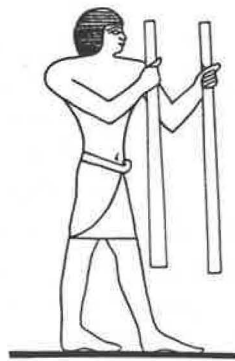


Fig. 4:1 Example of a typical kilt from the Old Kingdom (mastaba of Mereruka, after Duell 1938, pl. 72)

<sup>1</sup> See Riefstahl 1944:40, fig. 45. Riefstahl compared Tut'ankhamun's beaded "kilt" with the short, striped skirts worn by dancing girls depicted in the tomb of Ken-Amun (Riefstahl 1944:40, figs. 45, 46).

amount of cloth required was probably dependent both on the status and the resources of the wearer. Many of the identified kilts appear to be of the wrap-around variety which was fastened at the front.

Various authors have indicated that the kilts were rounded at one side (a typical example is given in fig. 4:1; mastaba of Mereruka, Duell 1938, pl. 72). Riefstahl noted that a kilt was a "rectangular strip which sometimes has one or both of its lower corners rounded" (Riefstahl 1944:3). Bonnet went one step further and produced a number of patterns for reconstructing such kilts which involved the deliberate folding of the cloth at one end (fig. 4:2; Bonnet 1917, Taf. II-III). What would seem more likely, however, is that the shape of the original length of cloth was purely rectangular with no shaping at either end. The rounded shape as found in the representations can be re-created by wrapping the cloth around the body; as less cloth is used around the waist than around the hips, the kilt is naturally pulled to one side. The

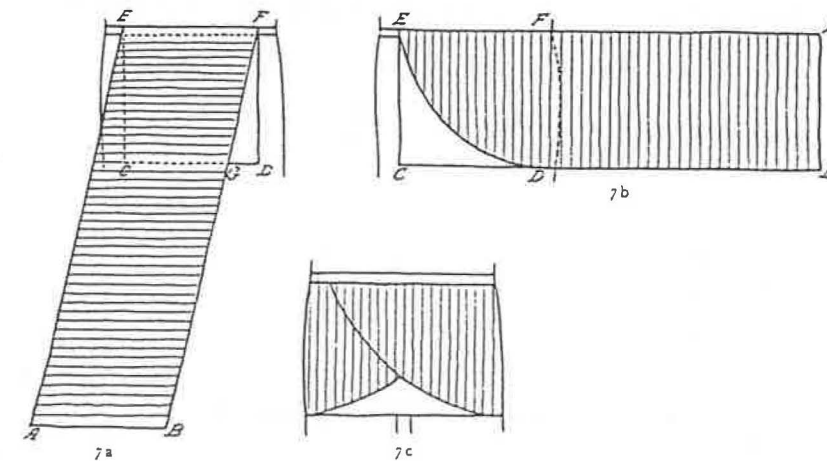


Fig. 4:2 Method of folding a kilt plus apron as suggested by Bonnet (Bonnet 1917, Taf. III)

top end of the cloth is then tucked into the top of the kilt or into a sash. This reinforces the shaped appearance produced by the wrapping of the garment around the waist. This method of fastening can be seen in the Fourth Dynasty mastaba of Kha'afkhufu I, Giza (Simpson 1978, fig. 32). In one of the reliefs there is a line of men with various offerings, all of whom are wearing kilts tucked into a sash worn around the waist (fig. 4:3).

In most cases a sash was worn over the kilt with the ends hanging down, and one such end is usually depicted in tomb paintings following the line of the kilt curve described above (see fig. 3:15). In some cases, however, the artist has made it clear that the kilt and sash were separate items, as in the



case of scribes and others from the mastaba of Kha'afkhufu I mentioned above (fig. 4:4; Simpson 1978, fig. 26).



Fig. 4:3 Figure of a servant wearing a kilt tucked into a sash (mastaba of Kha'afkhufu, Giza, 4th Dynasty; after Simpson 1978, fig. 32)

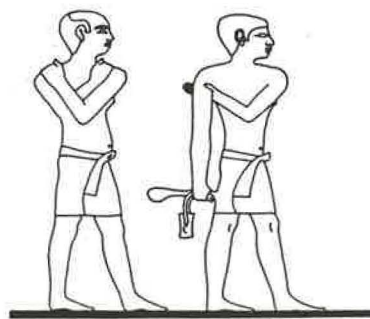


Fig. 4:4 Officials wearing short kilts and sashes (mastaba of Kha'afkhufu, Giza, 4th Dynasty; after Simpson 1978, fig. 26)

The number of times the cloth was wrapped around the waist appears to have varied, possibly according to the amount of material and the status of the wearer. In the case of the men shown working on a boat in the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Ti at Saqqara, it would appear that the majority of the workmen only wore a short length (fig. 4:5; Wild 1953, pl. CXXIX). Similarly, in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Rekhmire, a group of men are running and this movement causes their kilts to open (fig. 4:6; Davies 1943, II, pl. LXXIX). The way in which the garments are painted suggests that only a short length of cloth was worn.

At first glance a group of men in the Sixth Dynasty mastaba of Idut, Saqqara, appear to be wearing an apron with a double edge which was

worn over a short kilt (fig. 4:7; Macramallah 1935, pl. VII). However, as was shown elsewhere in this book, these men are wearing a short kilt fastened at the top with a sash, one end of which has been decoratively lain on the kilt. On the other hand, the ends of the kilt worn by a man in the mastaba of Kha'afkhufu was apparently deliberately folded back, perhaps in order to create a decorative effect (fig. 4:8; Simpson 1978, fig. 32).

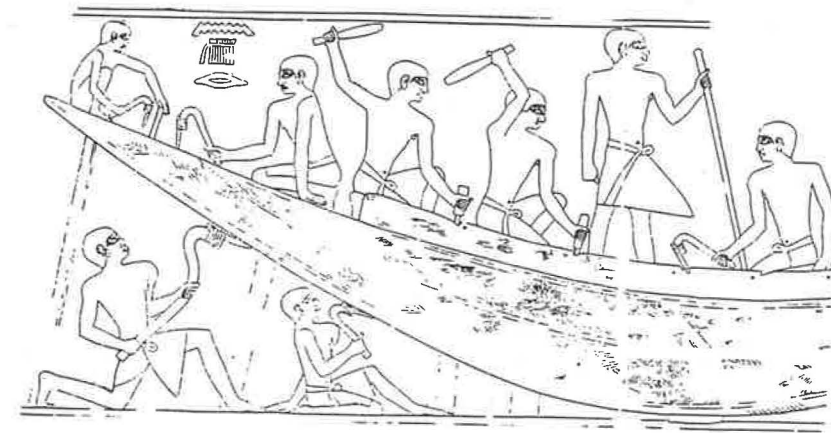


Fig. 4:5 Boatmakers wearing short lengths of cloth (mastaba of Ti, 5th Dynasty; after Wild 1953, pl. CXXIX)

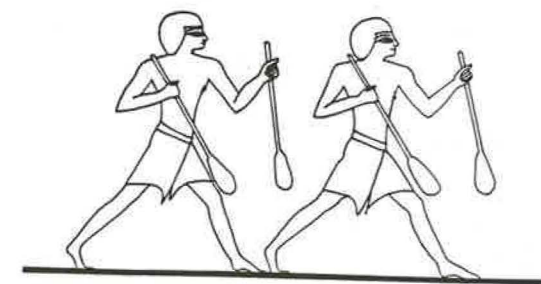


Fig. 4:6 Row of running men with kilts open at the front (tomb of Rekhmire, 18th Dynasty; Davies 1943, II, pl. LXXIX)

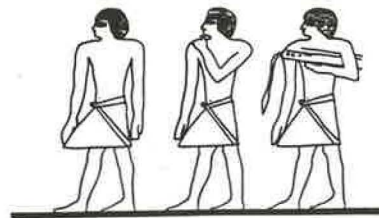


Fig. 4:7 Line of men wearing short kilts and long sashes (mastaba of Idut, 6th Dynasty; after Macramallah 1935, pl. VII)



Fig. 4:8 Servant wearing a short kilt with sash. The kilt has been partially folded back (mastaba of Kha'afkhufu, 4th Dynasty; after Simpson 1978, fig. 32)

Occasionally two kilts were worn on top of each other. Such a combination can be seen in the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Ti at Saqqara (Wild 1953, pl. CXXII). This official is wearing a vertically pleated kilt over a plain underkilt. The underkilt seems to be kept in place with a sash (fig. 4:9).

There would appear to be a second sash of some form over the upper garment. Pleated or striped kilts similar to the over garment discussed above can be seen in a number of other Old Kingdom tombs, for example the overseer of net makers in the tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep at Saqqara is wearing such a garment, as is a herdsman, also from the tomb of Ti mentioned above (fig. 4:10).<sup>2</sup> In these cases, however, there is no

<sup>2</sup> Moussa and Altenmüller 1977, Abb. 12; Wild 1953, pl. CXII.



Fig. 4:9 Man wearing a vertically striped, folded or pleated kilt over a plain kilt and sash (tomb of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Wild 1953, pl. CXXII)



Fig. 4:10 Herdsman wearing a vertically striped, folded or pleated kilt without a plain underkilt (tomb of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; Saqqara, after Wild 1953, pl. CXXIV)

evidence of an undergarment. There remains the question why a section of the kilt hangs loose. The effect can easily be achieved by tucking in some of the kilt for about 30-40 cm from the end of the cloth and leaving the rest hanging free. This, however, does not explain why it was done. Unfor-



tunately, no evidence is currently forthcoming to solve this particular problem.

In addition to the plain kilts described above, various other methods of decorating such garments have been noted. These can be divided into three basic forms: fringes; tassels; and pleats.

*Fringes:* One of the most common forms of decoration was fringing.<sup>3</sup> Two types of fringes can be differentiated, namely a warp fringe which is a long length of warp threads with a knot at the bottom, and a weft fringe or loop which is made up of a series of compact loops woven into the left-hand selvedge. The position of these fringes gives an indication of both the width of the cloth and how the garment was wrapped around the body. For example, a long kilt worn by Rekhmire has the weft loops or fringing around the top of the garment (fig. 4:11; Davies 1943, pl. LXIII). Judging from the size of the garment, which went from just under Rekhmire's armpits to his ankles, it is likely that the full width of the material was used.



Fig. 4:11 Rekhmire wearing a long kilt with a weft-fringe used in a decorative manner around the top (tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pl. LXIII)

<sup>3</sup> In the past many publications of specific tombs and their paintings have omitted these elements, thus it is not always possible to gain a clear idea of how common the use of fringing actually was during a particular period.

*Tassels:* Tasselled kilts only appear occasionally, and then usually in Old Kingdom tombs. For example, in the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Nufer and Kahay, Saqqara, a man included in a line of officials and suspects, wears a simple kilt, but the warp or weft threads at one end have been caught up and made into three large tassels (fig. 4:12).<sup>4</sup> The size of the three tassels, when compared with surviving examples of tasselling, would suggest that some licence has been taken. On the other hand, an official in the Old Kingdom mastaba of Nesutnufer, Giza, is depicted wearing a cross-barred kilt (see below), which has six smaller tassels at the end. The tassels are more balanced in appearance and probably nearer to reality (fig. 4:13; Junker 1938, Taf. VI).



Fig. 4:12 Man wearing a short kilt with three tassels (tomb of Nefer and Kahay, 5th Dynasty; after Moussa and Altenmüller 1971, pl. 6)

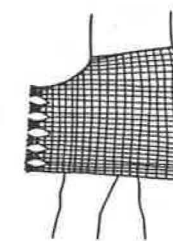


Fig. 4:13 Cross-barred kilt with six tassels (mastaba of Nesutnufer, Giza, Old Kingdom; after Junker 1938, Taf. VI:7)

<sup>4</sup> Moussa and Altenmüller 1971, pl. 6. See also Smith 1946, pl. 51 (Saqqara FS 3081).



Fig. 4:14 Single kilt with what appears to be horizontal pleating lines (mastaba of Seneb, Giza; after Junker 1941, V, Abb. 18)

*Pleating:* One of the more elaborate methods of decorating a kilt was the use of pleating. Several different types of pleating can be distinguished. The earliest forms appear in various Old Kingdom mastabas, for instance, in the Fourth Dynasty mastaba of Seneb, Giza.<sup>5</sup> In this example, the pleating consists of panels of horizontally set pleats (fig. 4:14).

It is likely that the pleated panel effect was created by the cloth being folded before the pleats were added. The folding of a garment prior to being pleated has been identified on a number of extant dresses from the Fifth Dynasty onwards, and there would seem to be no reason why this method could not have been applied to other items of clothing. The effect created on the so-called cross-barred kilts is similar to the horizontal pleating described above. Cross-bar pleating was used during the Old and Middle Kingdom (see figs. 3:20; 4:13). It is likely that the effect was created by the cloth being folded rather than pleated. Schäfer described this effect as follows: "In the Middle Kingdom it was fashionable to render the sharp-edged creases, which are produced by clothes lying in a large pile, as lines, as if to show that the owner could always dip into a full chest of garments" (Schäfer 1986:72). Care therefore has to be taken when deciding whether a series of lines depicted in a representation is due to pleating, or as suggested by Schäfer, had a more symbolic meaning.

A popular form of pleating is that of single pleating, with either vertical or horizontal pleats, although the former would seem to be more common. In some cases only the ends of the kilts were pleated, namely the area which hung from the waist at the front. In the Sixth Dynasty mastaba of Idut, Saqqara, a man carrying provisions is depicted wearing a short kilt

<sup>5</sup> Junker 1941, fig. 18, Simpson 1980, fig. 31. Cherpion 1984. It is possible that this type of garment may have been made out of rushes, but as yet there is no direct evidence for this suggestion.

with single pleating (fig. 4:15; Macramallah 1935, pl. XX). Because of the way in which the kilt was worn (see above), the vertical pleats appear to be radiating out from his waist. In fact, once the garment was taken off the pleats would return to their more normal vertical setting. In other examples the whole of the kilt appears to have been pleated, as in the case of a line of offering bearers from the tomb of Ibi (fig. 4:16; Kuhlmann and Schenkel 1983, Taf. 120). The bearers are all wearing short bag-tunics held in place with fringed sashes.



Fig. 4:15 Man wearing a short kilt with single pleating (tomb of Idut, Saqqara; 6th Dynasty; after Macramallah 1935, pl. XX)



Fig. 4:16 Offering bearer wearing a short pleated kilt and fringed sash (tomb of Ibi, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Kuhlmann and Schenkel 1983, Taf. 120)



Fig. 4:17 Kha'afkhufu wearing a chevron pleated kilt (mastaba of Kha'afkhufu, Giza, 5th Dynasty; after Simpson 1978, fig. 29)

In more elaborate examples, the frontal region of the kilt has herringbone pleating, in which both vertical and horizontal pleats were applied. This effect is created by pleating the cloth in one direction and then turning it ninety degrees and re-pleating it. This technique of double pleating the cloth creates the chevron pattern. Its use can be seen in the chapel of Kha'afkhufu at Giza (fig. 4:17; Simpson 1978, fig. 29). The existence of chevron pleating is demonstrated by a fragment of cloth now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, which has both vertical and horizontal pleating (EM 51513).

#### SASH-KILTS

This section discusses a man's garment which made its appearance during the New Kingdom. There are two forms, or perhaps simply manners of wearing of this so-called sash-kilt: (a) both sash ends go over the top of the garment; and (b) one end is beneath the main body of the sash and the other is tucked in around the waist.

#### *Surviving Examples of Sash-kilts*

So far only one example of a sash-kilt has been identified. It was found in an Eighteenth Dynasty tomb at Thebes. The burial at Sheikh 'Abd el-Qurneh was excavated in 1935-36 by a team from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (acc. no. 36.3.176). The anonymous burial (burial no. 1) was given field number 36069. Hayes described this object as a "flimsy linen

shawl", which he then went onto describe as a household object rather than an item of personal equipment (Hayes 1959, II, 187-188).

#### *Construction of a Sash-kilt*

The sash-kilt now in the Metropolitan Museum (acc. no. 36.3.176) is 188.0 long and 55.0 cm wide. It has been neatened along three edges using a rolled and whipped hem. The fourth edge retains its original selvedge.

Unfortunately it was not possible to examine this piece in great detail, so information concerning the fold lines and areas of wear are not available at present. It is thus impossible to say whether it was worn in the first or second manner.

#### *Depictions of Sash-kilts*

A typical example of the first form of sash-kilt is given in Figure 4:18, which comes from the New Kingdom tomb of the vizier, Ra'mose (Davies 1941, pl. XXVII). At first glance it is not clear whether it should be classed as a kilt or a large sash. However, the manner in which it was fastened indicates the latter rather than the former. Such sash-kilts are usually depicted covering the waist to knee region. The kilt section is characterized by converging lines coming from the waist and the knees to a point just

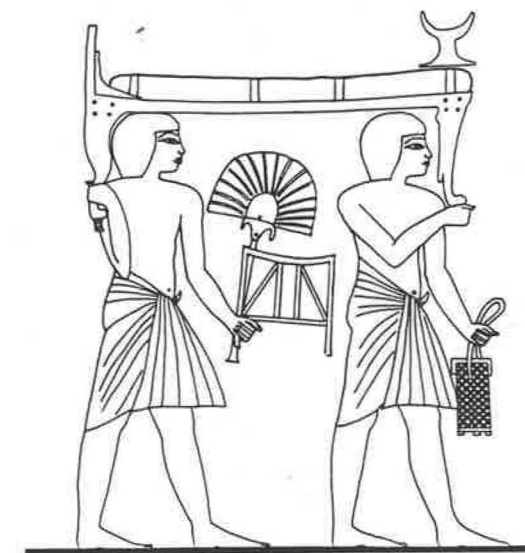


Fig. 4:18 Two offering bearers wearing simple sash kilts (tomb of Ra'mose, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1941, pl. XXVII)



below the navel. Longer versions of this garment can be found, but they are not as common and in general they are worn only by officials.

The effect of converging lines can be achieved by wrapping a long length of cloth around the hips once and then tying it with a simple half knot at the front. The ends are then allowed to hang decoratively down the front. In most cases only one end is visible. Occasionally, however, both ends are shown, as in the case of an official depicted in the tomb of Ra'mose mentioned above (fig. 4:19; Davies 1941, pl. XXXII). The upper end of the sash was carefully placed so as to create an elaborate scalloped effect, while



Fig. 4:19 Official wearing a bag-tunic and sash kilt. Both ends of the sash are depicted (tomb of Ra'mose, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1941, pl. XXXII)

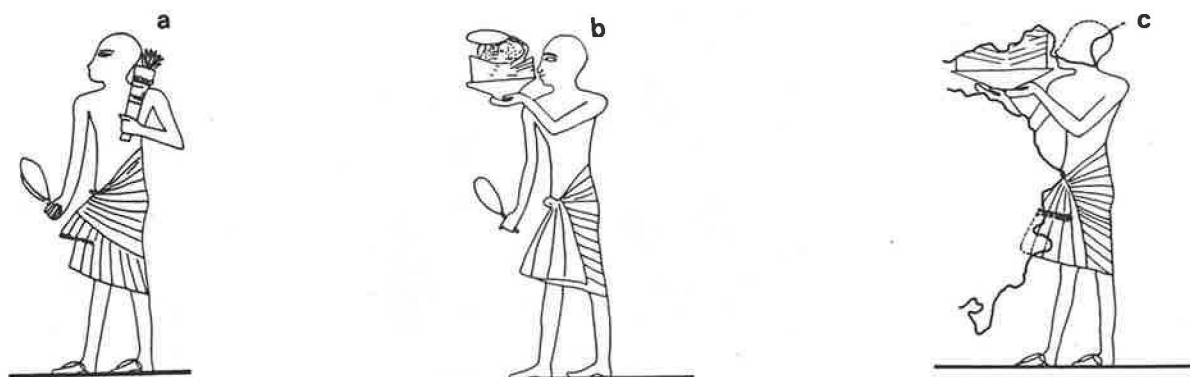


Fig. 4:20 Offering bearers from the tomb of Huy: (a) servant wearing only a sash-kilt; (b) servant wearing a sash kilt with fringed edge; (c) servant wearing a short bag-tunic and a sash kilt. (Tomb of Huy, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; Davies 1926, pl. XIV-XV)

the second, or lower end of the sash hangs more or less straight underneath. The sash was worn over a bag-tunic without sleeves, and probably a short kilt of some kind.

As indicated above, depictions show that the sash-kilt was worn either by itself or over other garments, notably, either a long kilt or a long bag-tunic. Both manners of wearing can be seen in the New Kingdom tomb of Huy (fig. 4:20). In the first example a number of servants are carrying various offerings, including mirrors (Davies 1926, pls. XIV-XV). Two of the men are wearing only sash-kilts. The first man, however, appears to be wearing a fringed sash as well as a kilt of some form. In another sequence from the same tomb there is a row of men wearing half bag-tunics, kilts and sash-kilts whose edges were arranged in elaborate folds (*idem*, pl. XIV).

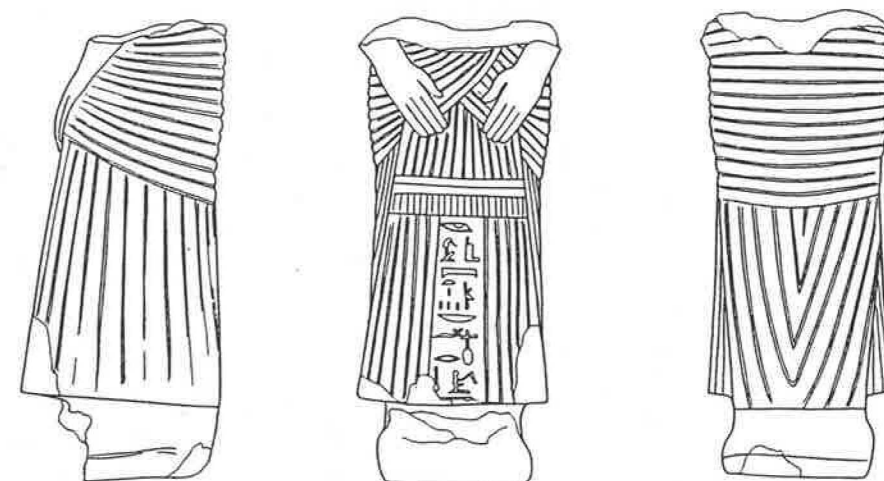


Fig. 4:21 Statuette of Neb-nefer wearing a sash-kilt fastened in sash end under the kilt section (after Wild 1979, pl. 33)

Another method of tying a sash-kilt can be seen on a New Kingdom statuette of Neb-nefer (fig. 4:21; Wild 1979, pl. 33). A fringed end of the sash hangs over another garment, perhaps a long bag-tunic. The rest of the sash was wrapped left to right around his hips and then tucked in at the top. A similar method of wearing a sash-kilt can be seen in various New Kingdom tomb paintings. For example, in the aforementioned tomb of Huy, the tomb owner is shown wearing a long bag-tunic underneath a sash-kilt (fig. 4:22; Davies 1926, pl. XVIII). It is worth noting that the artist has depicted both the weft-fringe going around the waist and the warp-fringe at the end of the cloth.

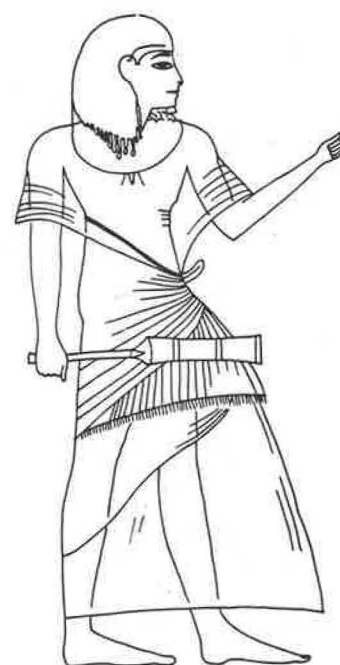


Fig. 4:22 Huy wearing a sash-kilt in a manner similar to that given in figure 4:21 (tomb of Huy, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1930, pl. XVIII)

#### *Scalloped-edge Kilts*

A typical example of the so-called scalloped edge kilt is given in Figure 4:23 taken from the tomb of Ken-Amun, Thebes (Davies 1930, pl. XVIII; see below). There is some question as to whether this is actually a sash-kilt or a separate garment, perhaps a scalloped apron of some kind. However, the latter is normally depicted going around the waist of the man (see fig. 4:23), while the material for sash-kilts comes from a point just below the navel (see fig. 4:18). Because it is not clear whether this is actually a variation or not, it would seem worthwhile to describe them as two separate items until further information becomes available.

As noted previously, depictions of the scalloped-edge kilt indicate that it is similar in appearance to the sash-kilt, but instead of spreading out from a central spot, it goes around the waist of the wearer. As no extant examples have been recorded, the following description of how they were made and

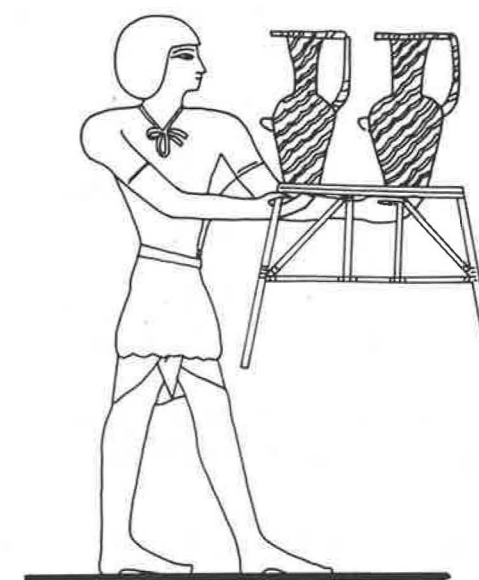


Fig. 4:23 Offering bearers wearing short bag-tunics, triangular aprons and 'scalloped' edged sashes (tomb of Ken-Amun, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; Davies 1930, pl. XVIII)

worn must be tentative. Nevertheless, it is possible that it was originally a long piece of cloth vertically gathered with large folds instead of the narrow folds associated with the kilts noted above. The length of cloth was then wrapped once or more around the waist and held in place with a broad sash.

The garment is normally shown worn with a short kilt and triangular apron, as can be seen above in Figure 4:23 from the Theban tomb of Ken-Amun (Davies 1930, pl. XVIII). In this case, however, the offering bearer is also wearing a half bag-tunic.

#### SKIRTS

As noted previously in the introduction to this chapter, there is little variation in the appearance of skirts. Normally, women are depicted wearing dresses of some type, but when they are shown in a skirt it is usually a simple length of cloth wrapped one or more times around the waist with the end tucked in at the top (fig. 4:24).<sup>6</sup> It was sometimes kept in place with a simple sash (see the following chapter). The length of the

<sup>6</sup> Mastaba of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Saqqara (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977, Abb. 24).

skirt varies quite considerably from mid-thigh to ankle length. The period seems to make very little difference to the appearance of women's skirts.

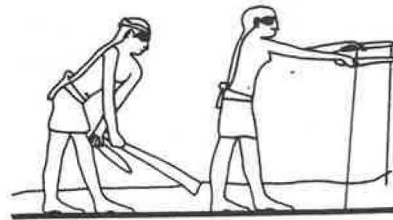


Fig. 4:24 Two women wearing typical short skirts kept in place with sashes (mastaba of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Moussa and Altenmüller 1977, Abb. 24)

The wrap-around nature of most short skirts is clearly seen in scenes depicting dancers. For example, several rows of female dancers are illustrated in the tomb of Anta, Deshasha (fig. 4:25; Petrie 1898, pl. XII). The dancers at one end of the line, when they are kicking their legs into the air, appear to be wearing shorts. The shorts are actually their skirts with gaping openings. As in the case of the kilts, the number of times a garment went around the body seems to be dependent upon the status and resources of the wearer. In general, however, the lower the social status the greater the chance that she would be depicted in a skirt (as opposed to a so-called sheath dress; see Chapter Six).

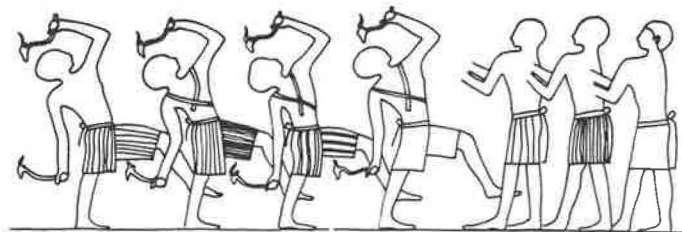


Fig. 4:25 Female dancers wearing short skirts open at the front due to their movement (tomb of Anta, Deshasha, Old Kingdom; after Petrie 1898, pl. XII)

#### *Discussion*

One detail which is clear from a comparison between male and female kilts and skirts is that the rounded edge so commonly found on men's kilts is missing on those worn by women. This omission may well be due to the

fact that the length of women's skirts was in general much longer and so the curving effect was minimized.

Another difference which becomes apparent during a study of kilts and skirts is the lack of decoration on the women's skirts. The main exception are dancers, but their costume can be classed as occupational rather than general everyday wear, and thus they fall into a special category.

In conclusion, it can be said that kilts were regarded as essential items of a man's wardrobe. They could be worn either with or without other garments. In general, during the Old Kingdom they were worn by themselves. By the New Kingdom it was normal to wear them beneath or over other items of clothing. These garments were frequently decorated with vertical and horizontal pleating. In contrast, women are only shown wearing simple skirts without additional garments. The length of these skirts varies quite considerably. There is little evidence of decoration.



## SASHES AND STRAPS

Although there are numerous representations of Egyptians wearing sashes or straps, it is difficult to identify surviving examples, for most of these accessories are depicted as simple lengths of cloth of various sizes.

In general, sashes are lengths of cloth which have both practical and decorative functions, for example as a means of securing a kilt or skirt in place. In most cases such sashes are worn around the waist, but as will be noted below exceptions do appear to occur.

A body strap, on the other hand, is a length of cloth which goes around the upper part of the body, usually over one or both shoulders. When worn by artisans or labourers, such items probably had a functional purpose, namely to prevent sweat dripping down the body.<sup>1</sup> On other occasions the use of body straps was more ornamental in character, while under certain circumstances it is likely that the sashes had a symbolic function. However, because this work is intended to be a guide to the different clothing types of everyday dress, reference will be made to straps and sashes without discussing their official or symbolic usage.

## SASHES

Strictly speaking, a belt is made of leather, while a sash is a piece of cloth wrapped around the body. As all but one of the pertinent objects found are made of cloth (the one exception is made of rope), it would seem reasonable to use the term sash. Similarly, the appearance of the majority of the sashes depicted is consistent with cloth rather than leather. So again the term sash would seem the more suitable.

It should be noted that certain types of sash formed an integral part of some styles of the wrap-around dress, and these will therefore be discussed in the following chapter.

<sup>1</sup> The use of straps for the carrying of goods or young children has not been included in this work because these represent working aids rather than actual items of clothing.

*Surviving Examples of Sashes*

Extant sashes can be divided into three distinct groups, namely: (a) those made of rope; (b) those of simple, tabby weave cloth, and finally (c) elaborately woven forms in both tapestry and double weaves.

(a) *Rope*: during his exploration of the Valley of the Kings at Thebes in the first decade of this century, H. Carter found a rope with a cloth loincloth in the coffin of a man (see pl. 2). The coffin was located in a cemetery of the late Middle Kingdom-First Intermediate Period, underneath the foundations of the temple of Hatshepsut.<sup>2</sup> The rope was made of a cord 0.5-0.5 mm wide (Z-plyed), and was knotted and fringed at one end. The other end is not visible in the published photograph, but it is likely that it too was knotted and fringed. It would seem reasonable to suggest that it was meant to secure the loincloth in place.

(b) *Cloth*: the tasselled ends of several sashes were found at the fourteenth-century Workmen's Village, Amarna (Vogelsang-Eastwood, in press). In each case they were made of a piece of linen (tabby weave) between three and five centimetres wide, with both longitudinal edges hemmed. The transverse edge was neatened by plaiting the loose threads together. In some cases there is only one big plait, in others up to three. As only the ends have survived there is no indication of the original length of the sashes.

A fringed sash from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun is now on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London for scientific research (Landi 1987:9-10; see below for details of other sashes from this tomb). It is 107.0 cm long and 20.0 cm wide (pl. 19). At either end of the sash there is a twisted fringe of about 4.0 cm. It was made from extremely fine linen. One of the long edges has the remains of a plain selvedge, the other has traces of sewing.

A length of cloth 16.5 cm wide and nearly 3 m long is housed in the National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden (pl. 20; RMO prov. cat no. 320). Its provenance is not known. The cloth used for the object is fine and care was taken in the sewing of the edges. Both long edges, plus one of the short edges (the other is missing), were neatened with a rolled and whipped stitch hem. The large size of the object, plus the fact that the edges were neatened, makes it likely that this is an example of a relatively wide sash.

<sup>2</sup> Tomb 37; Carnarvon and Carter 1912:83, pl. LXIX. See pp. 10-11 for a discussion of the loincloth.



(c) *Woven*: several objects described as "belts" are mentioned in the inventory of objects from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun. These objects include the ends of tasselled belts; items which may be either belts or scarves, and lengths of cloth described as "ties".<sup>3</sup> In addition there are numerous items simply labelled as rolls of cloth or bandages which might in fact have been used as sashes.

R. Pfister described three of Tut'ankhamun's sashes (pls. 23-26; Pfister 1937). The first (21ee [JE 29.3/34.50]) had two light blue bands on a reddish brown ground (*idem*, 217, pl. LIVf.). No length was noted for this object, but its width was given as 4.2 cm. It was woven in a warp-faced tabby weave. Both the second (21ff [JE 62645]) and third (100f [JE 62647]) examples were tapestry woven and included cartouches bearing names associated with Tut'ankhamun. The most elaborate example (21ff) is 61 cm long (incomplete length, excluding the fringe) and 6.5 cm wide (*idem* 213, pls. LIIf, LIIfb). The fringe is made up of nine plaits. The sash is tapestry woven. Near the fringe there is an inscription in hieroglyphics reading: "Nebkheperure beloved of Amon-Re, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands".<sup>4</sup>

As noted above, the third sash (100f [JE 62647]) described by Pfister is also tapestry woven. It is in two pieces which together make a length of 187 cm (*idem* 213, pl. LIId). At its widest point it is 4 cm (incomplete width). It has thirteen thick plaits at one end. It was woven in reddish brown, light blue and natural flax yarn. The incompletely preserved inscription includes the cartouches of Tut'ankhamun and the phrase: "Nebkheperure, Tut'ankhamun, Lord of Hermonthis" (Beilich and Saleh 1989:37).

The Liverpool Museum houses a length of cloth which is of relevance to this chapter, namely the famous "girdle of Ramesses III" (pl. 22; Liverpool Museum, M.11156.). It was purchased in Thebes in about 1855 by the Rev. H. Stobart and later bought in an auction by J. Mayer, whose collection forms the basis of the Liverpool Museum.<sup>5</sup> The girdle is 5.2 m long and tapers from 12.7 to 4.8 cm in width (Riefstahl 1944, 26). The design consists of a pair of bands, zig-zags, dots and rows of *ankhs*. It was woven in red, blue, yellow and natural flax. The name of the pharaoh, plus an inscription referring to the second year of his reign, was inscribed in ink at one end of the cloth. It has variously been described as a neck scarf, small waistcoat and girdle (Gennep and Jéquier 1916:95; Borchardt 1933:12-18). The last

<sup>3</sup> Murray and Nuttall 1963, 21ee, 21ff, 21gg, 21k, 54p, 101m, 101q; see also 101z (1).

<sup>4</sup> Beilich and Saleh 1989:10. My thanks to A. Egberts for his help with these inscriptions.

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed discussion of the history of the Ramesses girdle, see Peet (1933).

mentioned would seem the most reasonable description, as will be suggested below. There has been some controversy about this item. Some authors have suggested it was tablet-woven while others have said it was a double weave technique similar to that used for the decorative bands used on the bag-tunics found in the tombs of Tut'ankhamun and Kha.<sup>6</sup> It has now been shown by P. Collingwood in his work on tablet-weaving that it could not have been produced in this particular technique (Collingwood 1982:407-411).

#### *Construction of Sashes*

The cloth sashes so far examined have certain elements in common: the long edges are neatened with a simple hem of some kind. The transverse ends are either similarly neatened, or, more commonly, a tassel is made by plaiting the longitudinal threads. When deliberately woven as sashes, as in the case of the Tut'ankhamun examples described above, the longitudinal edges were 'neatened' with the selvages.

The width of these sashes varies considerably. As noted above those found at Amarna were up to five centimetres wide; an example found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun was slightly more than six centimetres wide, while the sash now in the National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden, measures 16.5 cm in width.

#### *Depictions of Sashes*

It would seem likely that everyday sashes, such as those found at the Workmen's Village, Amarna, were made out of any suitable length of cloth.

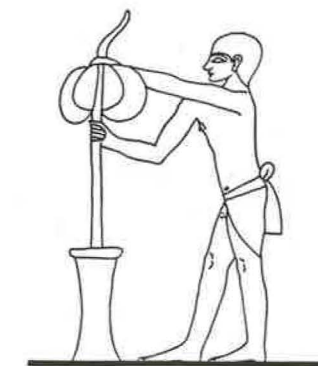


Fig. 5:1 Man wearing a cloth loincloth kept in place with a simple narrow sash (mastaba of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Wild 1966, pl. CLXXIII)

<sup>6</sup> Staudigel 1975; Crowfoot and Roth 1922; Barber 1991:119-120. See Chapter Eight for a discussion about such bands found on bag-tunics.



On the other hand, more formal and elaborate sashes would have been woven to order, and were thus more costly. The use of both types of sashes can be seen in reliefs, sculptures and paintings. Rope "belts" were probably the cheapest form available and used by labourers, craftsmen and possibly soldiers. Several Old Kingdom reliefs show men wearing cloth sashes of various kinds. For example in a relief from the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Ti at Saqqara, several men are depicted wearing cloth loincloths tied with a simple, narrow sash around the top (fig. 5:1; Wild 1966, pl. CLXXIII). In this case the sash appears to have been tied at the back, possibly to keep it out of the way. The wearing of what could well be ropes around the waist can be seen in several of the Middle Kingdom tombs at Beni Hasan. In the tomb of Khety two men are wearing kilts fastened around the waist with a narrow length of material or rope (fig. 5:2; Newberry 1894, II, pl. XV). The appearance of the garment recalls the rope found by Carter at Thebes mentioned above.



Fig. 5:2 Soldier (right) wearing what appears to be a long kilt held in place with a narrow sash (possibly made from rope; tomb of Khety, Beni Hasan, 11th Dynasty; after Newberry 1894, II, pl. XV)



Fig. 5:3 Two soldiers wearing a short kilt with broad, fringeless sashes (temple of Hatshepsut, New Kingdom; after Eggebrecht 1987, pl. 16/17)

Broad, fringeless sashes can be seen on a relief depicting a row of soldiers, which came from the temple of Hatshepsut (fig. 5:3).<sup>7</sup> The sashes are worn with open loincloths, and appear to be wrapped once around the waist, with the ends allowed to hang down the front. The depiction of a more elaborate, fringed sash can be found in the slightly later tomb of Menna (fig. 5:4). It is worn by a man working with harvested wheat. In this case, the man is wearing a long, broad example with warp-fringe (Mekhitarian 1954:77). It is worn over a short kilt.



Fig. 5:4 Labourer wearing a short kilt with a long, fringed sash (tomb of Menna, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Mekhitarian 1954:77)

It should be noted that the width of the sashes is not always clear, as the objects were often folded up around the waist and then allowed to expand in a decorative manner down the front of the skirt. For example, in the mid-Fifth Dynasty tomb of Anta at Deshasha, the tomb owner is depicted wearing such a 'narrow' sash opened out at the front (fig. 5:5; Petrie 1898, fig. XII).

In the majority of representations of men wearing sashes the sash goes over and covers the top of the kilt. Occasionally, however, the sash is placed a few centimetres down leaving the top of the kilt showing. This effect can be seen in the New Kingdom tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes (fig. 5:6; Davies 1943, pl. XVIII.). A line of scribes are wearing short underkilts with longer overkilts (calf length) which are kept in place with long sashes wrapped just above the hips. The sashes stop just below the hem of the overkilt. Around the top of the overkilt there is a line of weft fringing. The decorative nature, plus bulk of such a fringe are the probable reasons why the sash was placed nearer the hips rather than around the waist.

<sup>7</sup> Berlin DDR 14141, 18542. Eggebrecht 1987:116-117, pl. 16/17.



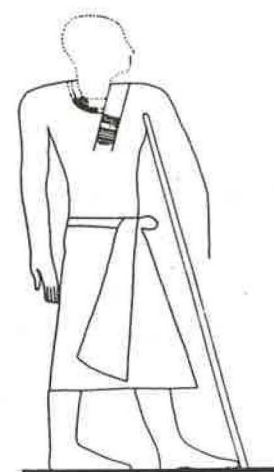


Fig. 5:5 Anta wearing a long kilt with folded sash which opens out at the front (tomb of Anta, Deshasha, 5th Dynasty; after Petrie 1898, fig. XII)

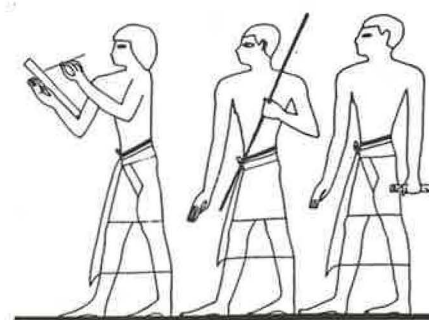


Fig. 5:6 Row of officials wearing short underkilts, long overkilts and long sashes. The sashes have been placed over the hips so that the fringing of the long overkilt is visible (tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pl. XVIII)

More variations in the placing of sashes can be seen in other New Kingdom representations. For example, in the tomb of Thanuny, a lute player is shown wearing a short kilt fastened with a sash, both of which are underneath a long bag-tunic (fig. 5:7; Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 23:a). On the other hand, in the tomb of Sobekhotep, a line of offering bearers is depicted who wear a long bag-tunic over a short kilt and a sash which has been fastened over both of the garments (fig. 5:8; Dziobek and Razik 1990, Taf. 27).

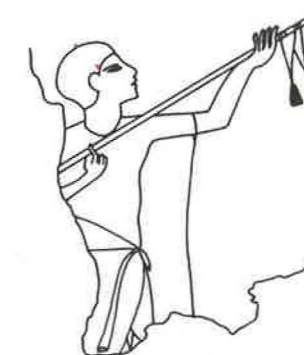


Fig. 5:7 Lute player wearing a short kilt with apron. The kilt is fastened with a sash. All of these garments are worn underneath a bag-tunic (tomb of Thanuny, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 23:a)

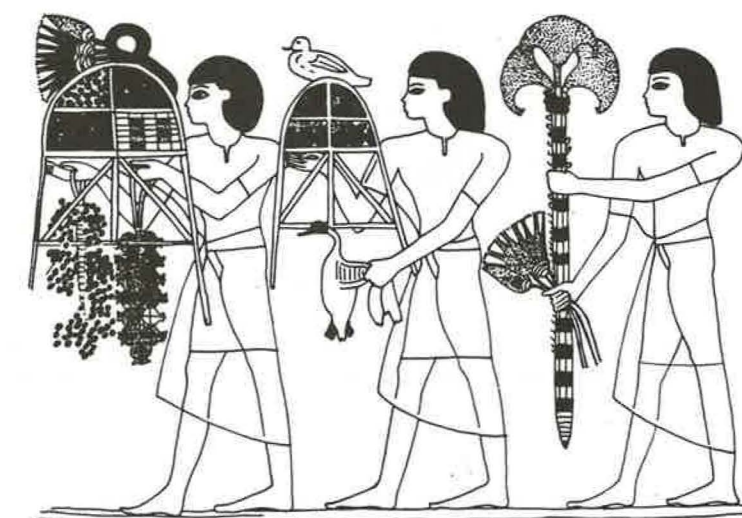


Fig. 5:8 Line of offering bearers wearing long bag-tunics and short kilts. Both garments are kept in place with a short sash worn on the outside of the bag-tunic (tomb of Sobekhotep, 18th Dynasty; after Dziobek and Razik 1990, Taf. 27)

Although the use of sashes was not restricted to men, there are considerably fewer depictions of women wearing them. One such example can be found in the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Ti at Saqqara. There are also several depictions of women at work in Ti's kitchen (fig. 5:9; Épron, Daumas and Goyen, 1939, pl. LXVII). The women are wearing short skirts (waist to knee) tied just above the hips with a sash fastened at the back. All women are engaged in grinding grain for the production of bread and beer. Another group of women in the same tomb is also involved in strenuous activity, this time threshing corn (fig. 5:10; Wild 1966, pl. CLV). The women are

depicted wearing long, single strapped dresses with a sash around their hips, which again was tied at the back.

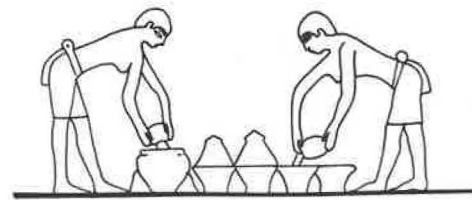


Fig. 5:9 Women working in a kitchen. They are wearing short skirts kept in place with sashes tied at the back (mastaba of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Épron, Daumas and Goyon, 1939, pl. LXVII)

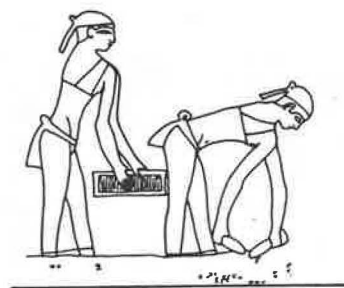


Fig. 5:10 Women threshing corn. They are wearing long, single strapped dresses with a sash tied around their hips. The sash is tied at the back (tomb of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Wild 1966, pl. CLV)

#### *Woven sashes*

Elaborate and more formal sashes such as those owned by Tut'ankhamun are normally only depicted on objects relating to deities or the court. This detail reflects the fact that so far this type of sash or girdle has only been found in royal contexts. There are also several depictions of Tut'ankhamun wearing sashes of various kinds on the golden shrine found within his tomb (fig. 5:11; Eaton-Kraus and Coraefe, 1985).

In addition to the depictions of Tut'ankhamun wearing decorative sashes, the young son of Ramesses III (ca. 1182-1151 B.C.), Prince Amenikhopeshef, is shown wearing a 'girdle' wrapped three times around his waist in a crossways pattern (fig. 5:12; Davies 1936, pl. CIII).

Finally, some words should be said about the broad decorative sashes worn by Nubian dignitaries and soldiers during the New Kingdom. These sashes can be seen in several tomb paintings, especially those in the New Kingdom tomb of Huy (fig. 5:13; Davies 1926, pl. XXVII). In each case the ground colour of the sash was painted red, while the decoration is in black.

ppp



Fig. 5:11 Tut'ankhamun wearing an a long, elaborate sash with fringe (from the golden shrine, 18th Dynasty; based on Eaton-Kraus and Graefe 1985, pl. XVI)



Fig. 5:12 Prince Amenikhopeshef wearing an elaborate sash wrapped three times around his waist in a crossways pattern (tomb of Amenikhopeshef, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1936, II, pl. CIII)





Fig. 5:13 Group of Nubians wearing kilts and decorative, broad sashes (Tomb of Huy, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1926, pl. XXVII)

The patterns depicted include series of ovals or circles. The use of such sashes by Nubian officials continued well into the first millennium A.D., long after they had gone out of use in Egypt proper (Adams 1988).

#### STRAPS

Narrow body straps of various types can be found in depictions from the Old Kingdom onwards. It is noticeable, however, that when sashes were worn by themselves they formed a predominantly male item of clothing. There are few representations of women wearing such straps and in most cases the women so depicted belong to specific and more active professions. Straps are usually worn by dancers or acrobats. On the other hand, when worn in combination with a dress or skirt, they became an essential item of female apparel. This point will be returned to below.

Normally, such straps are depicted as being fastened around the body in one of the following ways:

- (a) a single length of cloth which went diagonally over one shoulder to the waist on the opposite side of the body (wooden open-work figure of the official Pendenyt, BM EA 35893, *ca.* 1300 BC; fig. 5:14)
- (b) comparable to (a), but a broad length of cloth was used which went once around the body at chest height and was tucked in at the back (mastaba of Ti, *ca.* 2498-2345; fig. 5:15; Wild 1953, pl. CXXIV).



Fig. 5:14 Official wearing three kilts of varying lengths, plus a single length of cloth worn diagonally over one shoulder to the waist on the other side of the chest (wooden openwork figure, 18th Dynasty; BM EA 35893)

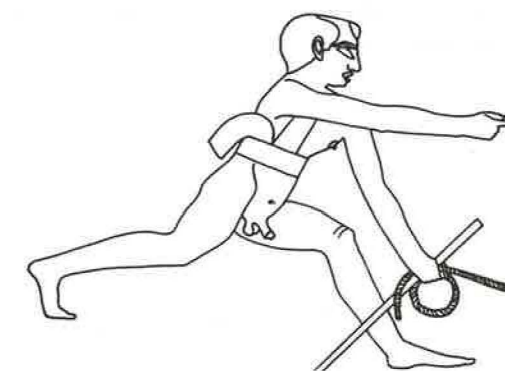


Fig. 5:15 Broad length of cloth wrapped once around the body at chest height and tucked in at the back (mastaba of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Wild 1953, pl. CXXIV)

- (c) strap wrapped over both shoulders; two straps were used one over each shoulder, as shown in the tomb of the Middle Kingdom tomb of Dhehuti-hetep (fig. 5:16; after Newberry 1894, I, pl. XIII).
- (d) a single length of cloth was used which went over one shoulder, around the waist, over the other shoulder, after which the two ends were tied together. Several variations of this form have been noted, especially in connection with female dancers and acrobats. The ends were sometimes at the front, on other occasions at the back (fig. 5:17a-c).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Petrie 1898, pl. XII; Moussa and Altenmüller 1977, Abb. 25.



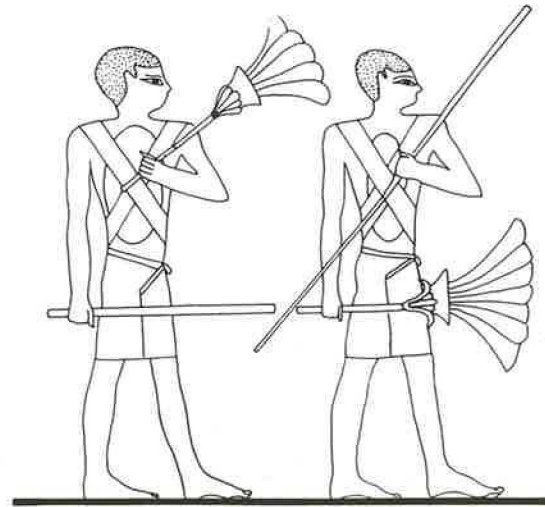


Fig. 5:16 Figure of a servant wearing a strap wrapped over both shoulders (tomb of Dhehuti-Hetep, Middle Kingdom; after Newberry 1894, I, pl. XIII)

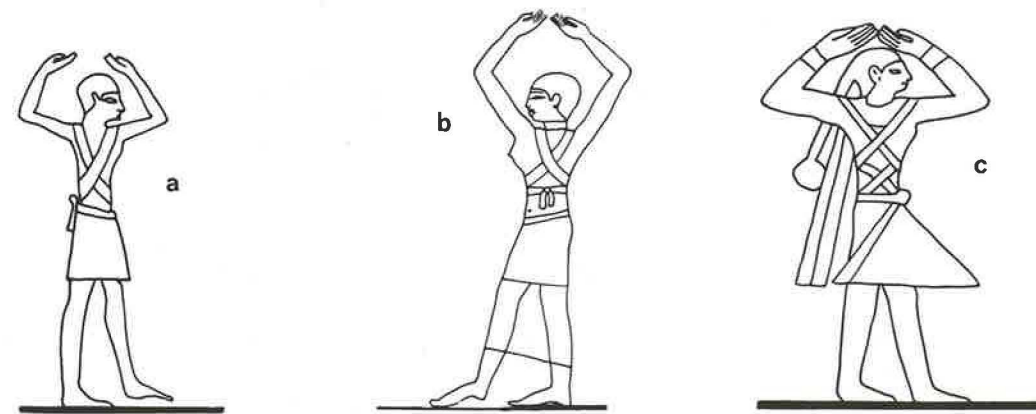


Fig. 5:17 Some variations in how straps were worn by female dancers: (a) straps crossed once at waist level and presumably fastened at the back (tomb of Ibi, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Kuhlman and Schenkel 1983, Taf. 28); (b) straps wrapped several times around the upper torso and tied at the front (tomb of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Épron, Daumas and Goyon, 1939, pl. LVII); (c) complex wrapping of the straps with the tie at the back. A separate strap is worn around the neck with the ends hanging down the back. (Tomb of Idu, Giza; after Simpson 1976, fig. 38)

In most of the examples cited above, the straps worn by men appear to have been simple strips of cloth, but occasionally striped or pleated examples can be found, as in the costume of priests. For example a priest from the tomb of Antefoker is wearing a striped sash (fig. 5:18; Davies 1920, pl. XIX). In addition, certain officials had two narrow straps which went over their shoulders and were sometimes tucked into the top of their kilts, but this was not always the case. Normally, such sashes are plain. Nevertheless, decorative examples can be found. For instance, 'Ankhn'ahor is depicted wearing such a strap with horizontal banding and narrow ends (fig. 5:19; Badawy 1978, fig. 41).

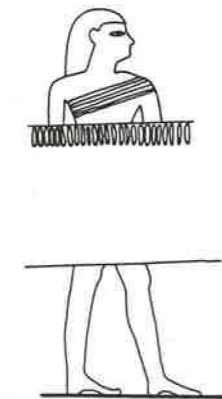


Fig. 5:18 Priest wearing a striped or pleated sash (tomb of Antefoker, Thebes, 12th Dynasty; after Davies 1920, pl. XVIII)



Fig. 5:19 Figure of an official wearing a striped or pleated sash over both shoulders with the ends hanging down over the chest (mastaba of 'Ankhn'ahor, 5th Dynasty, after Badawy 1978, fig. 41)

It was noted previously that there are more depictions of men wearing cloth sashes than of women, and that those worn by women tend to be simple in form. At first glance the same observation seems to apply to straps. There is, furthermore, far greater variety in the form and manner in which straps were worn by men. For example, there are numerous New Kingdom examples, where officials and higher dignitaries are depicted wearing a broad strap or sash which went over the left shoulder and over the top of a high skirt (fig. 5:20; Dunham and Simpson 1974, fig. 7). However, if the so-called sheath dresses included a strap which went around the body (see below), then most women are depicted wearing a body strap of some form. Nevertheless, such straps do tend to be simple in form, though there is variety in the way in which the straps were placed.

#### *Discussion*

The use of sashes has a long history in Egypt and can be attested from the Old Kingdom onwards. Sashes formed an essential part of male clothing. They were worn by men of all social groups and under a wide variety of circumstances. The most commonly depicted form of sash for men would appear to be a simple strip of cloth about ten to twenty centimetres wide which was allowed to hang down the front of a man's kilt or other garment.

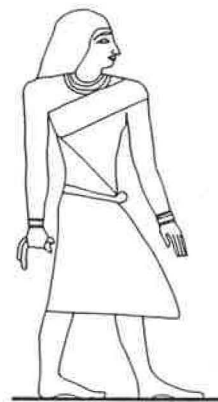


Fig. 5:20 Official wearing a broad body strap and high waisted kilt (mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III, Giza, 5th Dynasty; after Dunham and Simpson 1974, fig. 7)

On the other hand, depictions of women wearing cloth sashes are rare and appear to be related to the task in hand, namely, strenuous work such as winnowing or sieving grain where there was a chance of the garment coming undone and getting in the way. Similarly, the wearing of broad

decorative sashes by women would also appear to have restricted usage, as they are normally found only on representations of queens or goddesses. This lack of evidence may simply be due to the value of such items, which meant that they had a limited market. It is equally likely, however, that few women were depicted wearing sashes of any kind because they were not regarded as an everyday item of female apparel.

The situation as regards the body strap is somewhat different. The body straps worn by men display a greater variety of types and decoration than those worn by women. In general, body straps seem to have been more commonly worn by officials, rather than by all social groups under any circumstances, although care should be taken as this difference may simply be due to the nature of the visual records. In addition, such straps were worn as separate items of clothing, rather than as a means of holding another garment in place, as in the case of sashes.

In contrast all social groups of women appear to have worn body straps on a daily basis, as part of a dress, namely the wrap-around dress (the so-called sheath dress), rather than as a separate garment (see p. 102). In general, such straps are plain and have little decoration, but how they were worn varies considerably.



## CHAPTER SIX

## THE ARCHAIC WRAP-AROUND

The garment to be discussed in this chapter is one of the oldest clothing forms to be described in this study. For lack of any other suitable name, I would like to call this type the archaic wrap-around. There are several archaic representations of this garment, hence the adjective 'archaic', but it should be noted that its use apparently continued well into the Middle Kingdom and probably later. As will be shown, it was worn by both men and women, albeit with slight variations.

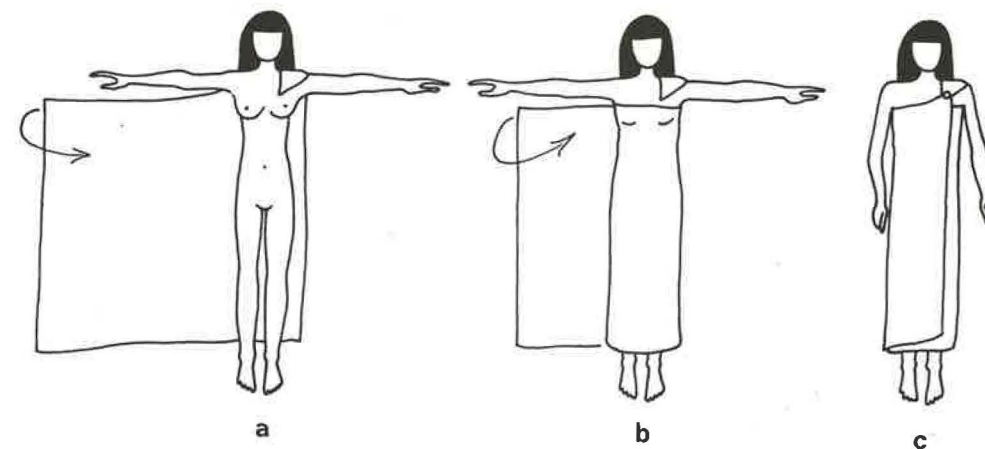


Fig. 6:1 Diagram showing the various stages of wrapping an archaic wrap-around

The archaic wrap-around would appear to be a single rectangle of cloth. The top corner of the material was draped over the left shoulder. The cloth was then passed one or more times around the body and under the arms ending near the left arm-pit (fig. 6:1). The two top corners were tied together on the left shoulder, giving the impression of a shoulder-strap. The fact that part of the cloth was used to tie the garment would account for the way in which, in some depictions, it is pulled up at the bottom left-hand

side. In order to keep the wrap-around in place it was sometimes worn with a belt or sash.

#### *Surviving Examples of Archaic Wrap-arounds*

Although cloth has been found in numerous Old Kingdom tombs and other contexts, to date no examples of the archaic wrap-around have been identified. It is necessary therefore to look at contemporary depictions in order to describe this item of clothing. It would appear from representations that a distinction was made between the garment worn by men and that worn by women.

#### *Depictions of Archaic Wrap-arounds*

The wearing of the archaic wrap-around by men can be seen in several early representations, notably the Narmer Palette (ca. 3150-3050 B.C.; EM JE 14716). The king depicted on the Narmer Palette is wearing a short wrap-around tied with a knot on the left shoulder (fig. 6:2). Instead of a simple sash, he is wearing elaborate royal accessories including a long tail, a patterned apron and a triangle ending in a small bird.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 6:2 King from the Narmer palette wearing an archaic wrap-around (EM JE 14716)

Similar wrap-arounds, but without the elaborate accessories, can be seen in the Old Kingdom tomb of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Saqqara (Moussa and Altenmüller 1977). In one register a man is shown wearing a wrap-around with a simple sash (fig. 6:3; Moussa and Altenmüller 1977, Abb. 24). The cloth, however, has only been passed once around the body

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the role of the bird, see Grimm 1990.



and there is a clear gap on his left-hand side. The man appears to be sweeping or tossing something, possibly grain. A virtually identical garment, again with a sash, is worn by a fisherman depicted in the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Idut, Saqqara (Macramallah 1935, pl. VII).



Fig. 6:3 Labourer wearing an archaic wrap-around with a simple sash (mastaba of Niankhkhnum and Khnumhotep, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Moussa and Altenmüller 1977, Abb. 24)

During the Middle Kingdom a change occurs in the type of person depicted wearing the archaic wrap-around. Previously, both pharaohs and fishermen had been shown wearing this garment. Gradually, however, it seems to have become the prerogative of gods and kings. By the New Kingdom this transformation had been completed. On a faience plaque depicting Piye (*ca.* 750-712 B.C.), from Thebes (Brooklyn Museum, 59.17), an attempt has been made to represent the combination of garments associated with the Narmer Palette mentioned previously. For example, there is a wrap-around garment (of a type usually associated with women, with an independent strap), which has been knotted over the left shoulder, and is worn with a short, pleated kilt (typical of the Old Kingdom onwards), apron (more in keeping with New Kingdom forms) and 'tail' (in keeping with the archaic form), a standard royal accessory.<sup>2</sup> These garments present a somewhat confusing group of clothing and may be seen as a late-historical interpretation of the earlier forms.

One of the earliest depictions of a female servant carrying offerings. She is wearing the archaic wrap-around can be found in the Fourth Dynasty

<sup>2</sup> For a further discussion concerning wrap-around dresses and shoulder straps, see p. 102.

mastaba of Fetekta, Asyût (fig. 6:4; Erman 1894:496, after LD ii 96). The strap of her dress goes over the right shoulder, with the curve of her dress and its strap clearly shown. The garment comes to her knees. Several other women from the same mastaba are depicted wearing more conventional wrap-around dresses with independent straps (see the following chapter). So it would appear that the artist was representing a distinct form of garment.



Fig. 6:4 Woman wearing a long, archaic wrap-around (mastaba of Fetekta, Asyut, 4th Dynasty; after Erman 1894:496)

Wrap-around dresses with single shoulder straps made out of the corners of the dress can be seen on a pair of tomb models now in the British Museum (BM 45074-5; fig. 6:5). These models of two servant girls carrying ducks and baskets date to the Twelfth Dynasty (*ca.* 1900 B.C.). The figures show how the dress was wrapped around the body and how the corner of the material was brought over the left-shoulder. The rounded edge of the cloth around the waist and breast is characteristic of this garment.

Similar wrap-around dresses with integral, single shoulder straps can be seen in a group of three statuettes of serving girls found in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Nakhti, Asyut (Chassinat and Palanque 1911, pls. IV, IX and X). It would appear from the way in which the garments are depicted that the skirt of the dress was wrapped several times around the body (fig. 6:6a-c). This can be seen in the different heights of the dress top. Two of the

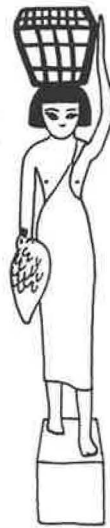


Fig. 6:5 Model of a servant girl wearing an archaic wrap-around (12th Dynasty; BM 45074)

garments are more conventionally represented with no indication of where the knot went. The third however, has the knot at the back of the dress. These dresses, however, vary from the example described above which is now in the British Museum, because two were worn with beaded skirts; the third is patterned.

So far I have been unable to identify satisfactorily any New Kingdom examples of the archaic wrap-around worn by women on an everyday basis.

As can be seen from the above discussion, the archaic wrap-around when worn by men was initially regarded as suitable for kings and royal attendants, as well as labourers and fishermen. Thus, it would seem reasonable to suggest that the wearing of this type of garment was not restricted according to occupation or rank. The range of dates associated with the above representations, namely the Archaic Period to the Fifth Dynasty, is also an indication that this type of garment may have been in use over a long period. Curiously, it is also one of the few early garments worn by men which did not survive in a recognizable form in the Middle and New Kingdoms, except when worn by gods and pharaohs.

When worn by women, this garment takes on a slightly different character. It is much longer and generally seems to have been wrapped at least one and a half times around the body. So far, no examples of a woman wearing this type of garment together with a sash have been clearly identified. As indicated by the depictions cited above and others, the use of this garment was probably restricted to servants, rather than being worn by all social groups of women. In addition, the wearing of this form of

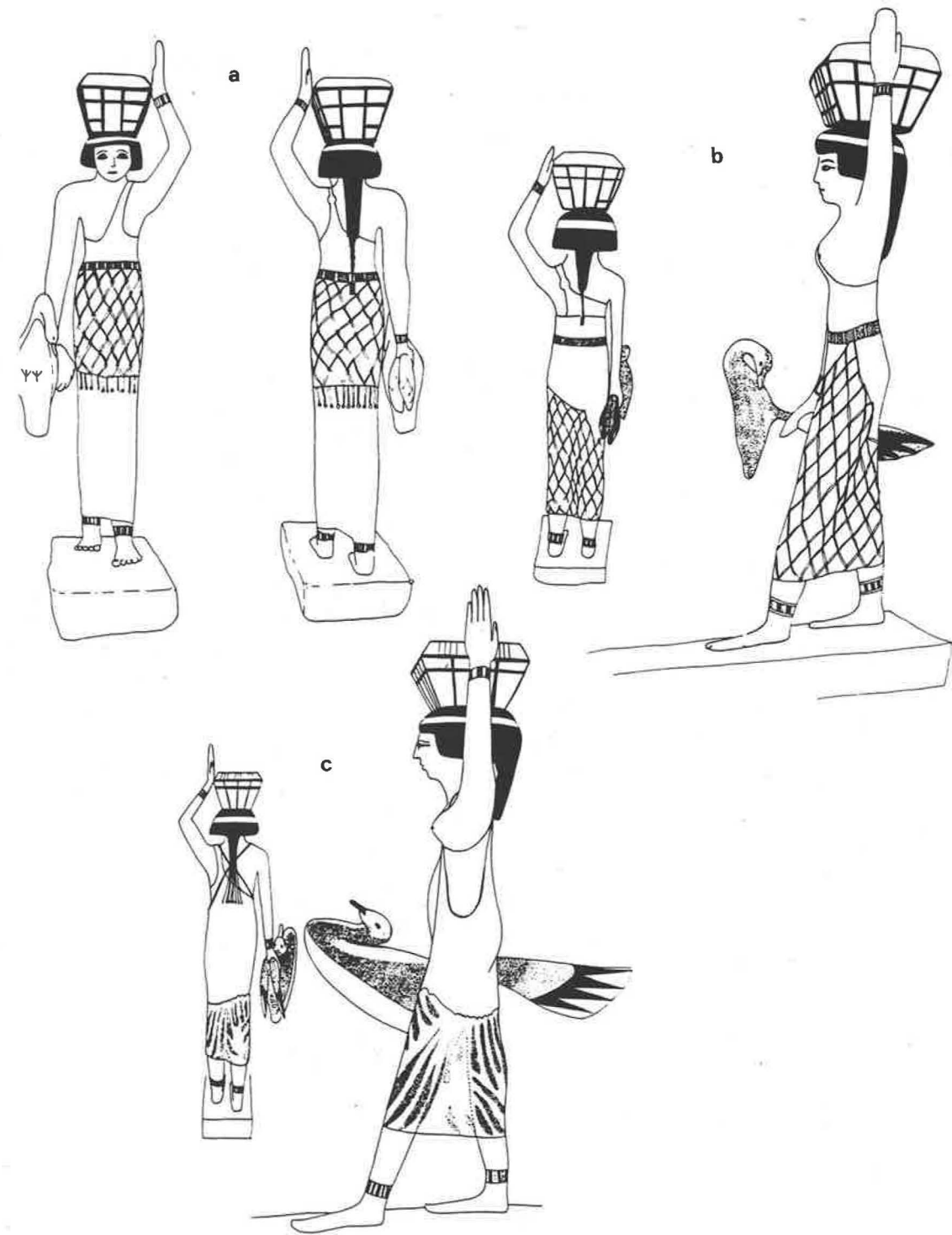


Fig. 6:6a-c Models of three servant girls wearing archaic wrap-arounds with bead-work overskirts in the case of (a) and (b). The nature of the overskirt from (c) is not clear (tomb of Nakhti, Asyut, Middle Kingdom; after Chassinat and Palanque 1911, pls. IV, IX and X)



garment by women can be traced well into the Middle Kingdom, but seems to vanish in the New Kingdom, perhaps because of the introduction of a new type of garment (possibly the bag-tunic, see Chapter Eight).

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### DRESSES

In this chapter I want to discuss a group of typically female garments, which can be generally classed under the term 'dress'. For the purpose of this study a dress is defined as a garment specifically worn by women, which fitted closely to the upper part of the body and which had either a flowing or tightly fitting skirt. Dresses were the most common form of female clothing throughout the Pharaonic period and the garments were worn by women regardless of their social position.

There are a small number of basic dress types, namely: the wrap-around forms; V-necked dresses, and finally, bead dresses. Each of these three types has its own variations, which seem to reflect chronological and social, and possibly even geographical, differences. These points will be discussed later. The wrap-around dresses differ essentially from the archaic wrap-arounds discussed in the previous chapter in the fact that a variation of the latter garment was also worn by men. Another difference is the shoulder-strap of the archaic wrap-around which consisted of two corners of the cloth being knotted together, while, as we shall see below, wrap-around dresses were worn horizontally across the body, with or without independent shoulder-strap(s).

(A) *Wrap-around dresses*: a wrap-around dress is simply made out of a large length of cloth which was wrapped around the body in various ways to produce different effects. It could be argued that this is in fact a skirt, but as it often also covered the top half of the body, it is more suitable to describe it as a dress. The widespread use of wrap-around dresses in ancient Egypt has hitherto not been generally recognized, and consequently this point constitutes one of the more important details to be discussed in this chapter.

(B) *V-necked dresses*: this type of dress is a tailored garment which was cut and sewn to shape. Both sleeveless and sleeved examples are known. It is characterized by its V-neckline.

(C) *Bead-net dresses*: as the name suggest, this form of garment was made of beads. Generally it was either worn over, or perhaps sewn to wrap-



around dresses. Exceptions, however, do occur and in specific cases this garment was worn by itself.

#### (A) WRAP-AROUND DRESSES

Wrap-around dresses are made up of large rectangles of cloth draped around the body, rather than being cut to shape. The Pharaonic wrap-around dresses fall into two basic categories:

- (a) a simple form which used a single length of cloth wrapped around the body. It was worn with or without one or two independent shoulder-straps;
- (b) a more complex form in which folds were included in order to produce a more decorative effect. This type of dress was sometimes worn with at least one other length of cloth which acted as a tie or sash. This type of wrap-around dress was never worn with body-straps.

##### (a) Simple Wrap-around Dresses

As in the case of the archaic wrap-around discussed in the previous chapter, the use of wrap-around dresses in ancient Egypt has to date not been widely acknowledged, mainly because of the fact that so few examples have actually been recognized. As noted above, the dresses are simple rectangles of cloth of various sizes, and at first sight they are virtually indistinguishable from common household items such as bed linen and curtains. However, a careful scrutiny of wear and crease marks on suitable lengths of cloth, as discussed below, can lead to the identification of such dresses, as will be shown.

Before we go into details concerning the construction of wrap-around dresses, it is first necessary to discuss one of the most readily identifiable female garments depicted in Egyptian tombs and statues, the so-called sheath dress. It was apparently worn by most women regardless of age, rank or occupation. It is often depicted together with one or two shoulder-straps. Yet did such a dress actually exist? It has been described by many nineteenth and twentieth century writers as a tube of material which was sewn down one or both sides and fastened by one or two shoulder-straps.<sup>1</sup> This hypothesis has become widely accepted. However, there are several reasons for doubting these views. To begin with, no such examples have

<sup>1</sup> See for example, Houston and Hornblower 1920:8-9 ("tunic with braces"); Scott (nd), chapter on dress; Millard 1986:407. It has even been suggested that this type of dress was "knitted in one piece so as to impart to it some elasticity and cause it to cling closely to the lower limbs of the wearer even when he [sic] moved" (Köhler 1928:54).

been found. If it was in such widespread use, then it could be reasonably expected that at least one example would have been recorded. When Petrie found nine dresses at Deshasha he was puzzled as to why none of them were of the sheath-dress form: "It is remarkable that not one dress was found of the form shown on the monuments, with shoulder-straps" (Petrie 1898:31). Nearly twenty dresses are to date known to have survived from the Old Kingdom onwards and none are of this form.

Another suggestion put forward as to how sheath dresses were worn includes the use of sets of pins to attach the straps to the skirt of the dress (presumably two at the front and two at the back). So far, however, no female graves from the Pharaonic period seem to have been recorded which include suitable sets of two or four pins. This would seem to discount the notion that pins were used for holding up sheath dresses.

It has furthermore been noted by a number of writers that sheath dresses, as depicted, would have been extremely difficult either to put on or take off, or to work in as they literally cling to the outlines of the body (see for example, Millard 1986:406-407; Robins 1990:45-46). It has also been argued that this was purely an artistic device, used by the various artists to give an impression of the garments rather than to depict reality, or that it was used to arouse sexual interest (see for example, Millard 1986:407; Hall 1986a:20). Yet few have attempted to explain how such garments could have been worn, for instance, by someone kneeling to present a collar or accepting flowers, perfume, or collars, as shown in Figure 7:1 from the tomb of Rekhmire (Davies 1943, pl. LXIV).



Fig. 7:1 Group of kneeling ladies wearing so-called sheath dresses (tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pl. LXIV)

Several writers have indicated other alternatives. M. Tilke, for example, wrote that he doubted the "theory of the close-fitting shirts [sic] with shoulder straps" (Tilke 1990:10). He then went on to suggest that the "Old Egyptian women's garment was probably a cloth arranged in the way of the spiral [wrap-around] garments (still similarly worn by East African tribes, the Galla or Somali" (*ibid.*).

Riefstahl tentatively put forward a similar solution when she presented the following description of a sheath dress:

... a narrow shift worn by women in the Old Kingdom and persisting in art almost to the end of ancient Egyptian history was a rectangle with a single seam (*or perhaps simply a wrap-around*) [my italics], reaching from breast to ankle and supported by attached shoulder straps (Riefstahl 1970:246).

Her suggestion was later supported by W. Needler in her article on the Egyptian linen in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, but the nature of the latter's work made it impossible for her to present any firmer conclusions or evidence to support this idea (Needler 1977:246). I would now like to put forward some ideas about how the so-called sheath-dress, which, as will be suggested, was in fact a form of wrap-around garment, was made and worn. It should be noted that I am first talking about the so-called sheath-dress without shoulder-straps. Below I will try to show that the shoulder-straps in fact constituted an independent element of the dress.

#### *Surviving Examples of Simple Wrap-around Dresses and Their Construction*

As noted above, in 1977 Needler identified a large rectangle of cloth now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, as a wrap-around dress (pl. 23; ROM 906.18.41. Needler 1977:243-246). The cloth was found in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Henhenet, Deir el-Bahri, which lay in the mortuary temple of King Nebhepetre Mentuhotep (Ayrton 1907:50; Needler 1977:243). The burial was described by one of the excavators, E. R. Ayrton, as follows: "Within the sarcophagus was the mummy of a woman, no doubt Henhenet, lying on the cloth wrappings" (Ayrton 1907:50). No further details were given. C. T. Currelly, however, in his work *I Brought the Ages Home*, described Henhenet as "lying on a pile of her wrappings and two of her shawls ... In the ultimate division of the material, Henhenet's two shawls, one of them very expensive fine linen were sent to Toronto".<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Currelly 1956:146. According to Needler the second "shawl" has not been satisfactorily identified within the Museum's collection (Needler 1977:245).

The dress still has both selvages, including a weft-fringe. One end of the cloth has an unravelled edge bordered by four multi-entries, the other was neatened with a fine rolled and whipped hem. The complete size is 322 x 117 cm (+ 6 cm for the fringe). Needler stated that experiments with modern cloth of the same dimension showed that the ROM example would have gone more than three times around the hips of Henhenet and would have been the right length for a French 'empire waistline' fitted beneath the breasts (Needler 1977:245). The ancient garment has stress marks on either side of the median line through its length, while the corners of the fringe side show "slight radial creases, as if gathered" (*ibid.*).

The second garment to be discussed is now housed in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (pl. 24; E.6204). Its provenance is unknown. The cloth is 290 cm long and 103 cm wide (+ 4 cm for the fringe). Both selvages are present. One end has a starting border while the other is neatened with a fine rolled and whipped hem. The basic method of neatening is therefore identical to that of the example from Toronto. In addition, the Brussels

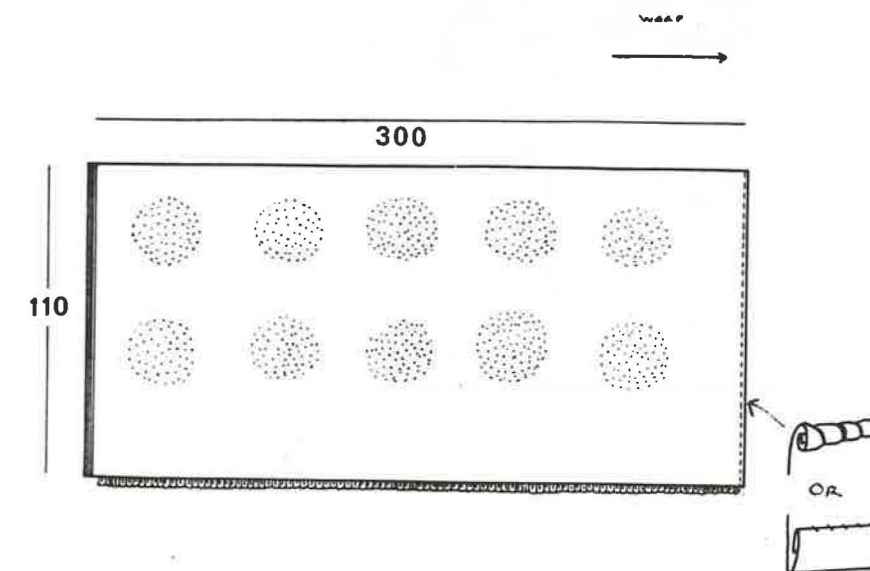


Fig. 7:2 Diagram of a typical wrap-around dress, showing constructional and structural details and areas of potential wear. approximate position of areas of wear



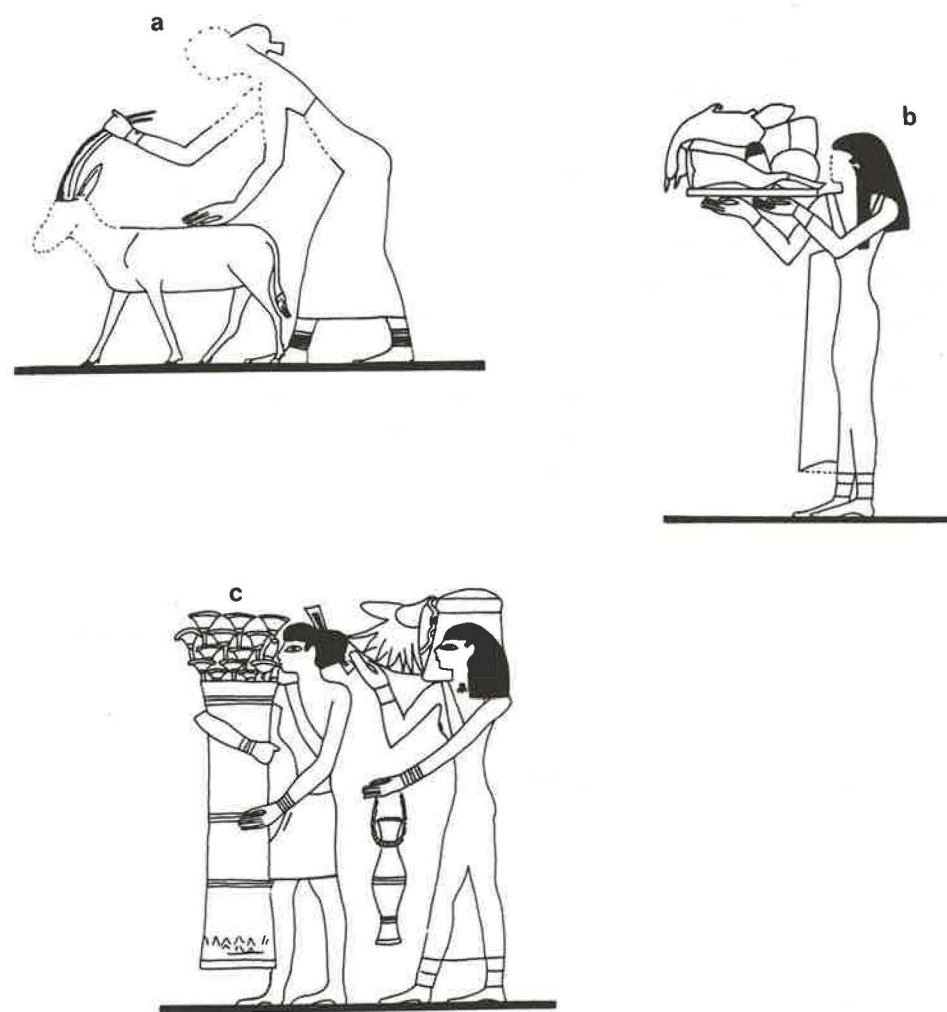


Fig. 7.3 Group of female servants wearing different types of clothing: (a) woman wearing a wrap-around dress; because she is bending over the width of her dress can be seen; (b) woman wearing a wrap-around dress with two shoulder straps; her dress would appear to be coming unwrapped; (c) woman wearing a man's short kilt and single body strap. (Tomb of Ukh-hotep, Meir, 12th Dynasty; after Blackman 1953, VI, pl. XVIII)

dress shows signs of wear with more intense patches of wear about 13 cm from the unfripped selvedge edge at intervals of about 45-50 cm above the median (fig. 7:2).<sup>3</sup> A similar pattern of areas of intense wear can be seen below, but these are slightly larger and lie wider apart. The areas of wear would indicate that the garment was originally wrapped two and a half times around the body. The wear patches are at suitable levels to be explained as underarm and hip stress points.

On the basis of both examples described above, a 'typical' wrap-around dress can thus be described as being about 290-320 cm long and 100-115 cm wide (depending upon the size of the woman). The longitudinal edges are neatened with a simple selvedge and a selvedge, sometimes with a weft-fringe. The transverse edges are neatened using a starting border and a fine rolled and whipped hem, or possibly two rolled and whipped hems. It is essential, however, to have signs of wear in order to confirm the point that such lengths of cloth were actually used as garments.

#### *The Wearing of Wrap-around Dresses*

The basic wrap-around dress consists of a dress worn by itself or with one or two straps. The dress is made of a long rectangle of cloth which was loosely wrapped twice, possibly three times around the body with the open end of the cloth placed to one side of the body (probably the right-hand side). This would have allowed sufficient material for ease in walking or working. Such a width of cloth at the ankles is depicted in the late Twelfth Dynasty tomb chapel of Ukh-hotep, Meir (fig. 7:3; Blackman 1953, VI, pl. XVIII). The woman (a) hurrying an animal is wearing a garment which had plenty of material in the skirt, as in the case of the other women depicted walking. The artist who painted this group actually shows one of the women (b) in the act of losing her dress which is gradually becoming unwrapped. The dress is coming undone from the right-hand side of the women's body. The other women (for example, (c) are wearing conventional 'sheath-dresses' with paired shoulder straps. Woman (d), however, is most curiously garbed, as she appears to be wearing garments normally associated with men, namely, a long body strap which went diagonally across the body and a short, pointed kilt. Several other women in this tomb are similarly depicted in men's clothing, and it remains one of the mysteries of this tomb why they were shown wearing those garments.

<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence of later damage due to either the presence of the bitumen or natron associated with the mummification process, or fluids released during the decomposition of the body. The presence of such substances would have indicated damage following mortification rather than wear caused during the life time of the owner.

As indicated above, the shoulder-straps which are often depicted together with the wrap-around dresses, formed independent items. At this point I would like to discuss this point in more detail, since the presence of these straps has always been an important factor in the identification of these garments as sheath-dresses. The depictions of women wearing a 'sheath-dress' with one or two shoulder-straps would indeed give the impression that the straps were attached to the dress, either by sewing or pinning. Most writers on the subject have accepted this explanation, especially in view of their identification of the whole garment as a 'sheath-dress'. However, as already pointed out that the so-called sheath-dress would have been an awkward garment to put on and wear, the inconvenience would have been even greater if shoulder-straps were attached to the garment. When the relevant garment is identified as a wrap-around dress, as I suggest in this chapter, we cannot but explain the shoulder-straps which are sometimes (but not always!) shown in combination with the dress, as separate items, similar to the independent shoulder-straps discussed in Chapter Five. In this light, it is possible to identify, on the basis of the various depictions, the following methods of wearing the shoulder-straps: Firstly, one or more short lengths of cloth were placed over one or both shoulders and then tucked into the top of the dress at the front and back. Secondly, the shoulder strap was part of a body strap or a narrow length of material, which was wrapped around the torso.

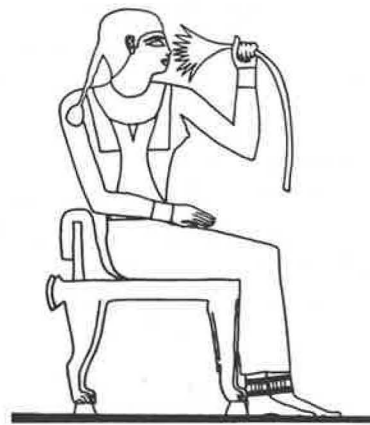


Fig. 7:4 Idut wearing a split-strap (?) with a long wrap-around dress (mastaba of Idut, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Macramallah 1935, pl. XX)

A third, tentative, method of strapping which produced two shoulder straps is indicated in the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Idut, the daughter of Unas, Saqqara (fig. 7:4; Macramallah 1935, pl. XX). In this case, Idut wears two

straps, one over each shoulder. The straps appear to have been made of a single length of cloth slit down the middle in order to make an opening for the head.<sup>4</sup> The wearing of such straps is also indicated for female workers,

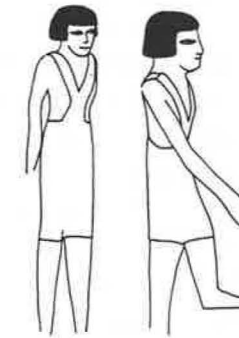


Fig. 7:5 Female servant figure wearing split straps and a short wrap-around skirt (Middle Kingdom; after Arnold 1981, Taf. 41c-d)

so it cannot be regarded as a special item only worn by a particular social group. For example, D. Arnold illustrated a number of small wooden statuettes of female servants found in the Middle Kingdom temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahri (fig. 7:5; Arnold 1981, Taf. 41:a-d. See also fig. 10:3). The figures are now only wearing painted clothes, namely short skirts

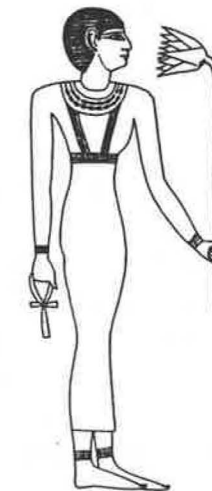


Fig. 7:6 Achat wearing decorative straps with a wrap-around dress (after De Meulenaere 1985:54, no. 21)

<sup>4</sup> Another explanation for the block at the end of the straps is that the artist has neatened their appearance. They are in fact two separate items placed over each other.



wrapped around the waist, and split shoulder straps which reached down to the skirt. Unfortunately the reverse of these figures is not depicted, so it is not possible to see how the back of these straps were finished.

The combination of two separate items, namely a dress and straps, would also explain a number of details encountered in various tomb paintings, for example, the use of beaded straps with belts; the wide variety of strap types depicted and how they were used; the varying position of the dress itself, and even the fact that some women did not wear shoulder-straps at all.

The question why shoulder-straps were worn remains to be answered. As indicated by the dress worn by Achain, the straps would appear to be primarily a decorative element of the garment, hence the wide number of variations in form and size (fig. 7:6; Cairo 11/11/20/17; De Meulenaere *et al.* 1985:54, no. 21). But it is also likely that they were worn by female workers to prevent sweat pouring down their body. It would after all be easier to wash a simple strap than a skirt of up to three metres long. Nevertheless, at present, how or indeed whether "shoulder straps" were worn seems to have been a purely personal detail. An indication is given in Figure 7:7 of some of the permutations in how the straps were worn according to various representations.

Another element in the wearing of wrap-around dresses which varied considerably is the position of the top of the dress and the length of the garment, for example, there are depictions of a top line which passed across the nipples; a top line below the nipples; a top line just below the breasts and a top line which went around the waist. Because of the nature of the garment, namely a simple length of cloth which was wrapped around the body, it did not matter where the top line was placed. Its position could change according to the task in hand; the time of day or even the amount of cloth the wearer could acquire. As a result the garment length could vary between the knees and ankles.

The colour of the cloth would also appear to be variable. The majority of wrap-around dresses depicted are white. Nevertheless coloured examples can also be found, although these may be subject to artistic licence. In the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of Emsaef, for instance, there is a row of three women wearing green, red and white dresses respectively (Michalowski 1969:201, Abb. 81). In addition to monochrome garments, decorative examples are also depicted, especially with respect to the garments worn by queens and goddesses. Various suggestions can be put forward about the way the dresses were patterned. For instance, they may have been dyed, resist-dyed, embroidered or tapestry woven. But until actual, coloured examples are found these suggestions must remain speculative.



Fig. 7:7 Some variations in the use and appearance of shoulder straps with wrap-around skirts.

- (a) Tomb 27-31, Thebes; Carnarvan and Carter 1912, pl. LIV
- (b) Tomb of Rekhmire; Davies 1941, pl. LXIII
- (c) Leipzig no. 1907; Klebs 1915, Abb. 76
- (d) Statue of Ukh-Hotep, Meir, Simpson 1987, 16-17
- (e) Chapel of Nefret, Maydum; Petrie 1909??, pl. XX
- (f) New Kingdom bust of a queen, Karnak; De Meulenaere 1985:64, no. 26
- (g) Statue of Kheneno-pet II, Karnak; De Meulenaere 1985:56, no. 22
- (h) Kayser 1966:15-16, 3113
- (i) Tomb of Sen-nez-su, 7th Dynasty; Petrie 1900, pl. IX
- (j) Stele of Mut-mautz, 8th Dynasty; Hayes 1953, I, 141
- (k) Mastaba 88, Saqqara, 4th Dynasty; De Meulenaere

In addition to the forms of patterning mentioned above, several statues and other objects are shown with a trellis work pattern over the garment which is generally believed to indicate beads. This form of decoration will be discussed later in this chapter.

Several depictions have been found, especially from the Old and Middle Kingdoms, which show wrap-around dresses with weft or looped fringing. This decoration was sometimes placed around the top, as in the case of a woman depicted on a Middle Kingdom stele from Thebes.<sup>5</sup> In other representations the edge of one or both of the shoulder straps was looped. An example of looping along one of the straps is found in the New Kingdom tomb of Tetiky, Thebes, where both servants and mistress wear a fringed shoulder strap (fig. 7:8; Carnarvon and Carter 1912, pl. V:1).<sup>6</sup>

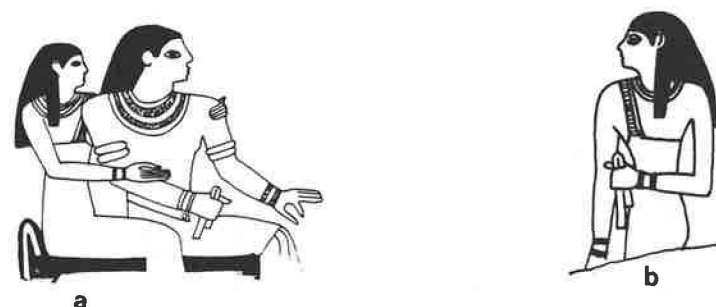


Fig. 7:8 Weft-looping on the shoulder straps worn by the wife of Tetiky and a servant (tomb of Tetiky, Thebes, New Kingdom; after Carnarvon and Carter 1912, pl. V:1)

#### (b) Complex Wrap-around Dresses

In the past a special type of garment has always been recognized as a wrap-around dress. These are the so-called wrap-around dresses which appeared during the New Kingdom. For the purpose of this work I will refer to them as complex wrap-around dresses. They were generally made from a large rectangle of cloth draped in various decorative manners. Occasionally a

<sup>5</sup> Stele from tombs 27 and 31. Carnarvon and Carter 1912, pl. LIV.

<sup>6</sup> Looped fringing is an indication of cloth made on a ground loom and represents the extensions of the weft past the selvage (De Jonghe 1985). As noted above, occasionally a weft-fringe is depicted along the top of a wrap-around dress. Such fringes are bulky and it is possible that they were cut off. Such an action may help to explain two details, firstly, why they are rarely depicted, and secondly, why long lengths of weft-fringing can be found in many museum collections and during excavations.

second, smaller length of cloth was used as a sash in order to secure the garment in place.

#### Visual Evidence for Complex Wrap-around Dresses

Various types of complex wrap-around dresses can be found in New Kingdom depictions. But it should be stressed that until more evidence is found in the form of wear and crease patterns in extant examples, we can

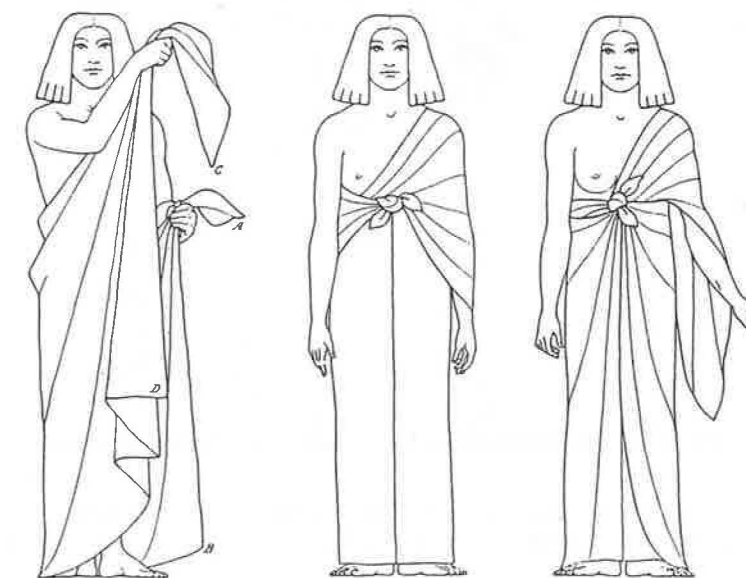


Fig. 7:9 Wrapping of a complex wrap-around dress (after Bonnet 1917, Taf. VIII)

only speculate on the manner in which such garments were worn. As noted by A. M. Donadoni-Roveri, some of the reconstructions are indeed "ingenious" (Donadoni-Roveri 1987:197). However, it is worth summarizing some of these forms. H. Bonnet, for example, suggested that the dresses were wrapped in the manner depicted in Figure 7:9 and that a number of different variations could be achieved by re-allocating the cloth (Bonnet 1917, Taf. VIII-IX). The relevant effect was achieved using only one piece of cloth.

The use of one piece of cloth to create such a complex garment can indeed be deduced from a number of New Kingdom tomb paintings and statues. A typical example can be seen in the tomb of Ra'mose. A female relative of Ra'mose is wearing a wrap-around dress which went over her left-shoulder and then around her waist, probably several times, before it was tucked in below the right breast (fig. 7:10; Davies 1941, pl. XI).

The weft-fringe of the cloth was used as a decorative feature and can be seen just below her right armpit. A similar wrap-around dress can be seen





Fig. 7:10 Lady wearing a wrap-around dress draped over her left shoulder and then wrapped around her waist (tomb of Ra'mose, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1941, pl. XI)



Fig. 7:11 Lady wearing a wrap-around dress knotted just below her right breast (New Kingdom; BM EA 36)

on a dyad of an unknown man and wife now in the British Museum, London (EA 36; fig. 7:11). She is wearing a pleated dress wrapped several times around her body and shoulders covering both breasts, and with the ends knotted together under her right breast. A possible method for wrapping this type of dress is given in Figure 7:12.

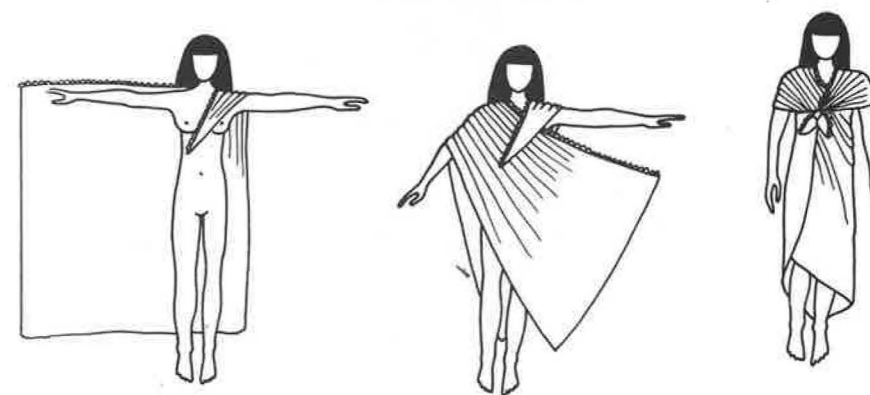


Fig. 7:12 Possible method of wrapping the dress depicted in figure 7:11

A second form of complex wrap-around dress can be seen in the mid-fourteenth century B.C. tomb of Huy (Davies 1926, pl. XI). It has a voluminous skirt, bat-wing sleeves and a large knot over the breast, or just below it (fig. 7:13). B. Bruyère, suggested that this form was worn in the manner shown in Figure 7:14 (Bruyère 1937, II, 59, fig. 30). While the desired effect can be achieved using his system, I found that when putting on such a garment it was easier if the 'shoulder straps' came down first of all, before the skirt was wrapped around, thus reversing Bruyère's order for nos. 2 and 3. Perhaps this difference lies in the fact that the second method for tying the garment is suitable for a woman who dresses by herself, whereas Bruyère's suggestion works well if two people fasten the dress, namely a lady and her maid.

There is some overlap between the two types of garments described by Bonnet and Bruyère, and in some cases it is not altogether clear which type of dress was being depicted. Nevertheless, the two forms discussed, plus variations, would appear to be suitable methods for producing the sartorial effects.

Female mourners are frequently depicted wearing a wrap-around dress or skirt around their waist. In some cases it would appear that the garment was knotted in front. In the case of others, however, there is evidence that a belt or sash was worn over the top and that this was knotted in front. A suitable example of the latter can be seen in the late Eighteenth Dynasty



Fig. 7:13 Group of women wearing complex wrap-around dresses which are open at the front (tomb of Huy, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1926, pl. XII)

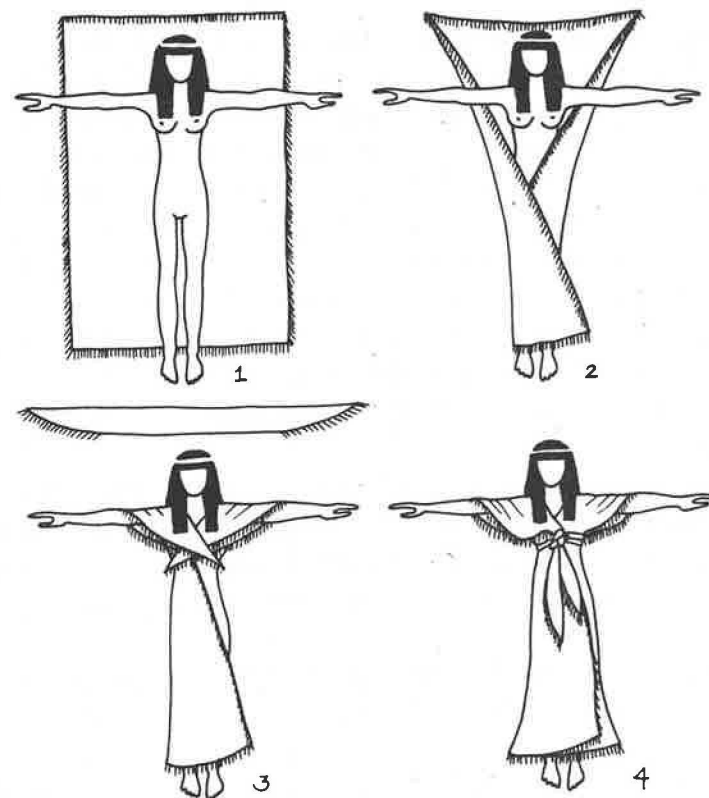


Fig. 7:14 Wrapping of a complex wrap-around dress plus sash (after Bruyère 1937, II, fig. 30)



Fig. 7:15 Female mourners wearing open wrap-around dresses (tomb of Meryra, Amarna, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1903, I, pl. XIII)

tomb of Meryra (fig. 7:15; Davies 1903, I, pl. XIII). The women belong to a band of professional mourners. Several of the women are wearing long skirts with vertical fold lines and a sash around the waist with horizontal fold lines. It is worth noting that the warp and weft fringes are differentiated. In the case of the woman to the extreme left, the warp fringe hangs down the side of the garment, while with the two women in the front the weft fringes go around the waist and form part of the sash.

#### (B) DRESSES WITH V-NECKLINES

The next category of dresses to be considered are those with V-necklines. A comparatively large number of V-necked dresses have survived dating from the Old and Middle Kingdoms. These dresses can be divided into two basic types, namely, sleeveless and sleeved forms.

##### (a) Sleeveless V-necked dresses

As the name suggests this type of garment has a deep V-neckline, but it was worn without sleeves. Present evidence suggests that the garment was made of one piece of cloth. This hypothesis is further strengthened as various representations do not show a seam line just below the bust, which is normal for the wrap-around dress.

##### Surviving Examples of V-necked Dresses

During G.A. Reisner's excavations at Giza a well preserved wooden coffin was found in Shaft G2220B (Reisner 1942:451-452, pl. 42; Roth 1988:76-77).



The burial probably dates to the late Fourth, early Fifth Dynasty (Porter and Moss 1974, III, 83). The coffin contained a female mummy. According to the excavation notes, there were no other objects associated with the burial apart from the coffin, body and cloth wrappings (pl. 25). The wrappings were examined by D. Derry who found nearly forty layers of cloth (Reisner 1942:452). Under item 4 of his report he wrote:

A large sheet of linen was laid over the body looking like a tunic with a V-shaped neck, leaving arms and the lower part of the legs exposed: similar to a statue. (*ibid.*)

It is a slight misnomer to call this particular item a 'garment', as only the front half remained. It is not clear from either the photograph or the accompanying text whether it was a piece of cloth which had simply been cut in the shape of a dress, or whether it was part of an actual garment. Unfortunately, it was destroyed during Derry's examination of the mummy in Egypt, so it is now impossible to state exactly how the 'garment' was made. What is clear, however, is that great attention was paid to the mummy, down to the inclusion of well-made cloth breasts to give as a life-like an appearance as possible. The care taken with the mummy suggests that equal regard was paid to ensure that the form of the V-shaped garment was also accurate. Because no sleeves or pleating were indicated it can be suggested that the Giza 'dress' was a simple, V-neck form without sleeves.

In addition to the dress described above found by Reisner, a second 'half-dress' was found at Saqqara in 1982 by the joint Hannover/Berlin expedition (Munro 1983:102-103; Hall 1986a:29). The garment was found in an Eleventh Dynasty tomb covering the body of Niuty, a young girl. The dress was described by the excavator as being fine and pleated (the pleat direction was not given, nor was the presence of sleeves mentioned; Munro 1983:102). According to Hall it also had tie-cords (Hall 1986a:29). No further details are available as the condition of the garment made it impossible to preserve it (Munro 1983:102-103).

#### *Visual Evidence for Sleeveless V-necked Dresses*

There are numerous sculptures and paintings of sleeveless V-necked dresses which date from the Old Kingdom onwards. Suitable examples for illustrating the continued use of this type of garment include the Third Dynasty statue of Neset now in the Louvre Museum, Paris (Smith 1958, pl. 23). Neset is wearing a white dress with a deep V-neck (fig. 7:16). No sleeves are indicated. Representations of this type of dress continue well into the New Kingdom and later: see for example, the fifteenth century B.C. statue

of Sennefer and his wife and daughter, from Karnak and the slightly later bust of a queen also from Karnak.<sup>7</sup> Both of these women appear to be wearing typical sleeveless V-necked dresses. It is not clear from these later examples, however, whether the garments depicted should be regarded as artistic conventions for the clothing worn by ladies from the court or whether actual garments from this later period are being depicted. Until well documented garments from the New Kingdom onwards are found, this point will have to remain open.

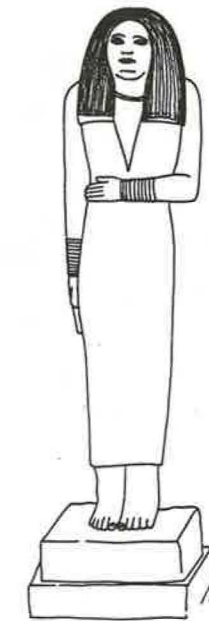


Fig. 7:16 Figure of Neset wearing a white dress with deep V-neckline and no sleeves (Louvre A38, 3rd Dynasty; after Smith 1958, pl. 23)

Finally, reference should be made to pleated V-necked dresses without sleeves. A curious example of this type of dress with vertical pleating can be seen on a statue dating from the Old Kingdom now in the Oriental Institute, Chicago (fig. 7:17; O.I. #10.618. Staehelin 1966, pl.II:2). The pleats are continuous from the shoulders to the hemline, which would suggest that such garments would have been made in one piece. Another dress, with what appears to be horizontal pleats, is depicted in the Fifth Dynasty

<sup>7</sup> De Meulenaere, *et al.*, 1985, no. 6 (CG 42126 = JE 36574) and no. 26 (CG 42009 = JE 37216).



tomb of Ti at Saqqara (Wild 1953, pl. CLXIV). The wife of Ti is shown wearing a dress with two straps which have some form of decoration delineated using straight, horizontal lines (fig. 7:18). The skirt, however, is decorated with wavy, horizontal lines. The appearance of these lines is unusual, because pleats are normally indicated with straight lines. It is possible, therefore, that some other form of cloth is being depicted and that the appearance of the garment is due to the way in which the cloth was woven.<sup>8</sup>

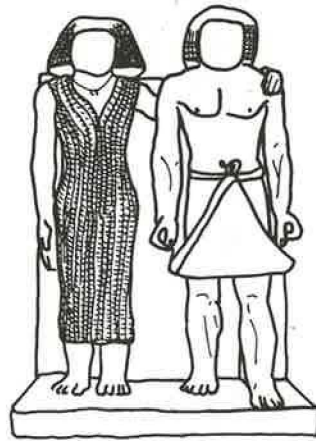


Fig. 7:17 Statue of a woman wearing a vertically striped or pleated V-necked dress (OI no. 10.618, Old Kingdom)

As a generalization the V-necked dress seems to have been worn by more mature women. In each case the breasts are totally covered, although there is a slight variation in the position of the end of the V-neckline. The position of the waistline of these dresses is low and would appear to be actually centred on the waist rather than higher up (breast or French Empire level).

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion about so-called "crimped garments", see Hall, 1986b. It is worth noting that a simple wrap-around dress in the same type of material can be seen in the Theban tomb of User (TT 21; Davies, 1913, pl. pls. XXV-XXVI). In this case, User's wife (?) is wearing a wrap-around dress with two straps (weft-fringes are visible on the straps and the top of the skirt section; fig. 6:24). Both the straps and the skirt section are patterned with wavy lines and it is more likely that these depictions represent crimped dresses of some kind. In addition to his wife wearing this type of cloth, User is also depicted in a long crimped kilt, and a crimped cloak which went over his shoulder (Davies, 1913, pls. pl. XXVII).



Fig. 7:18 The wife of Ti wearing a dress with two, decorative shoulder straps. The dress is patterned with wavy, horizontal lines (tomb of Ti, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Wild 1966, pl. CLXIV)

#### (b) Dresses with V-necklines and Sleeves

The majority of surviving dresses fall within this sub-category. Over fifteen examples are known and published with varying degrees of detail. All of them have certain points in common: namely, the main bodice (yoke) and sleeves were made of two pieces of cloth sewn to a large rectangle of cloth which formed the lower half or skirt of the garment. All have long sleeves. Some examples are pleated, others not.

#### *Surviving Examples of V-necked Dresses with Sleeves*

The earliest dress comes from Mastaba 2050, Tarkhan (pl. 26; UC 28614Bi; Landi and Hall 1979, 141-152). It was found by Petrie during his 1913 excavation at the site (Hall 1982, 29-30). The dress was dated by Petrie to the reign of Djet, the fourth king of the First Dynasty (ca. 2800 B.C.). This date was confirmed by a C-14 test carried out in 1969. However, in 1978 a second C-14 test was carried out which gave it a date some 700-800 years later (*ibid*). Nevertheless, because the tomb, plus related finds, indicate a First Dynasty origin, Hall feels that the dress should be regarded as dating to the First Dynasty in origin (Hall 1982:30).

Only the top half of the Tarkhan dress now survives. This includes both sleeves, the bodice and part of the skirt section. There is evidence for pleating on the sleeves and bodice, but there are no traces of pleating on the skirt portion (Landi and Hall 1979; Hall 1982:30). There are crease marks on the sleeves, plus stains in the armpits, and these details suggest that the garment had been used in real life (Hall 1982:30).



Petrie, in the account of his excavations at Deshasha, mentions the fact that clothing was found in many of the tombs (Petrie 1898:31). Unfortunately, few of these garments were either preserved or described. Nevertheless, two items are now in the Petrie Museum and have been examined and published in great detail by R. Janssen (née Hall).

Certain of Petrie's finds are of particular interest. Apparently a total of nine dresses were recorded by Petrie at Deshasha, all of which come from one burial (Petrie 1898:31-32). They were found in grave 148b, a woman's burial, which was given a Fifth Dynasty date by the excavator. Two of the garments were so rotten they could not be salvaged, and of the other seven saved by Petrie, only two now survive (pl. 27). The two surviving dresses are in the Petrie Museum, London (UC 31183 and UC 31183. Petrie 1898:31-32; Hall 1982; 1984).

The following description of the dresses is that given by Petrie in *Deshasha*:

They consist of one piece of stuff from waist to feet, lapped round and sewn down the edge; to that are sewn on two pieces passing over the shoulders, and continued out into long sleeves. The gap at front and back was closed by tying with three pairs of string before, and the same behind. The narrow sleeve has in some cases a sort of fin of loose stuff left below it; this was originally a surplus left for letting it out, but it was frequently enough as to suggest that it had become ornamental (Petrie 1898:31)

The measurements of the dress (given in inches [cm]) were:

	Length of skirt	Total Length	Width
Fine stuff	52.5 [133.5]	64.0 [162.5]	23.0 [58.5]
Fine stuff	43.0 [109.0]	54.5 [138.5]	-
Fine stuff	48.5 [123.0]	60.5 [153.6]	22.0 [59.0]
Fine stuff	57.0 [145.0]	68.5 [174.0]	23.0 [58.5]
Coarse stuff	54.0 [137.0]	65.5 [166.5]	-

Two other dresses were "found elsewhere and preserved white" (Petrie 1898:32). The measurements of these dresses were:

	Length of skirt	Total length	Width
Fine stuff	48.0 [122.0]	59.0 [150.0]	16.0 [40.5]
Very open stuff	50.0 [127.0]	59.0 [150.0]	18.0 [45.5]

Petrie suggested that the dress lengths (see above) indicated that they had been worn with a belt or girdle of some form, although he noted that no

such object had been found in the tomb, nor did he find any traces of creases or wear where a girdle of some kind might have gone (Petrie 1898:32). The possible relevance of these sizes will be discussed later in this chapter.

Two dresses were found by Schiaparelli, during his work on the necropolis at Gebelein, south of Luxor, in 1911 and 1920 (Schiaparelli 1921; Brunton 1940; Hall and Pedrini 1984). Both of these dresses have been given a Fifth Dynasty date by Schiaparelli and Brunton, but Hall suggests a slightly later, Sixth Dynasty date (Hall 1985, Table 1).

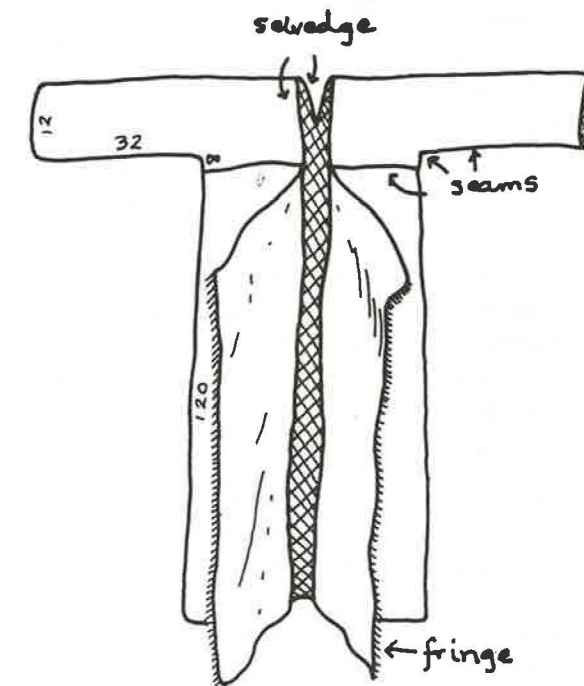


Fig. 7:19 Diagram of a dress found in Burial 3, Gebelein (after Brunton 1940, pl. LI:21)

The first dress comes from an unnumbered tomb in the northern necropolis (pl. 28).<sup>9</sup> No details were given concerning the sex of the body. There is evidence of wear and perspiration stains on the garment, a clear indication that it was not made specially for the tomb. Hall and Pedrini have speculated that it was a made to measure garment (Hall and Pedrini 1984:136-139).

<sup>9</sup> Turin acc. no. 14087. Schiaparelli 1921:126-128; Hall and Pedrini 1984:136-139.



A second garment found at Gebelein came from Burial no. 3 (fig. 7:19; Brunton 1940:522, 226-227, pl. LI:21). All the objects from this grave went to the Egyptian Museum in 1920, but they were not examined in detail until 1934 (Egyptian Museum, temp. no. 16.5.20/5. Brunton 1940). Burial no. 3 contained the body of a woman wrapped in a mat. On the body there was a rough cloth garment (the dress), plus a shawl. The following description of the dress comes from Brunton's account of the objects, which was based on observations made by his wife:

Apparently an old garment adapted for use as a shroud. This is strongly suggested by the discrepancy between the careful sewing of the fringe to the selvedge, and the slipshod cobbling of the sleeve seams. The garment is made like a loose dressing-gown, the fronts made wide enough to wrap right over the narrow fringe edging. This fringe is closely sewn on to the turned back selvedge. The foot of the garment, where a modern hem would be, is rolled and very coarsely bound, another sign of adaptation as the shroud. The sleeve is cut like the modern *galabieh* sleeve only narrower, with the stuff continuing on to the shoulder, in this case apparently as far as the neck and centre front, but the actual neck is missing. The seams are all on the straight and the stuff has been torn so that the edges became ravelled before being cobbled coarsely together. The cut of the arm-hole would not allow of any movement, such as raising the arm, without dragging on the stuff and tearing it. The modern *galabieh* has a gusset inserted below the arm to allow for movement. In this garment the place of this gusset is a mere continuation of the material, the under-arm seam and that starting down the right side of the body, meeting at a right angle. This awkwardly cut shoulder meets the wide 'shawl' only a few inches below the arm-pit. The garment could then be only a 'wrap-over' from this junction down. (Brunton 1940:526-527)

In another article about this burial, Brunton stated that the original style of the garment was exactly the same as the Turin dress (described above), but lacking any pleating. Its total length was 140 cm. The points that Brunton made about the fringes plus selvedges and the hems will be discussed later in this section.

The Boston Museum of Fine Arts houses a number of dresses which come from several tombs at Naga-ed-Der in Middle Egypt.<sup>10</sup> Four of these dresses were found in Tomb N94, which dates to the Sixth Dynasty (pl. 29; BMFA #'s. 13. 3966A-C, 34.56). The tomb was excavated in 1902-3 by G.A. Reisner (Reisner 1932:11-13). A total of twelve dresses were found, of which at least nine went to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Several of the Boston

<sup>10</sup> BMFA nos.: 13.3966a; 13.3966b; 13.3966c; 34.56a; 34.56b; 34.56c; 34.56d; plus two other garments which went to Boston, but which have now been described as untraceable (Riefstahl, 1970; Hall, 1985, Table 1). See also Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE 88144.

dresses have been described by Riefstahl, who was of the opinion that the garments had been worn in life (Riefstahl 1970). This point was confirmed by Hall when she examined a number of the dresses (Hall 1985).

Several garments were found in Tomb 13, an anonymous Ninth to Tenth Dynasty burial at Asyut (pl. 30; Louvre 12026. Chassinat and Palanque 1911:162-4, pl. XXXIII). The tomb contained a total of four coffins, a detail which will be returned to later. According to Chassinat's account, one of the coffins contained a number of garments of which only one could be saved (Chassinat and Palanque 1911:163). The items in question were described as "tuniques de toile légère, plissées dans le sens de la largeur. Le tissu en était malheureusement brûlé par les matières issues du corps en décomposition" (Chassinat and Palanque 1911:163). No details were given concerning the sex of the body. It is clear from the photograph published by Chassinat and Palanque that the "tunique" which could be saved was in fact a pleated sheath dress with V-neckline and sleeves.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, two examples of a V-necked garment were found by Ahmed Bey Kamal at Meir in 1912.<sup>12</sup> "On a ramassé avec ce monument une pièce complète en toile, frangée d'un seul côté, et deux chemises également en toile, pliées comme le *koresha* de nos jours".<sup>13</sup> Fortunately, one of the dresses is illustrated in the excavator's report, so it can be confirmed that the garments were actually pleated, V-necked dresses with sleeves (Kamal 1914, fig. 21). The two dresses were found near a chamber in the plundered tomb of Meni (E1). The tomb was given a Fifth Dynasty date.

#### *Construction of a V-necked Dress with Sleeves*

The basic construction of all of the above mentioned garments is the same, although small variations do exist, notably in their sizes (see below). A typical example is made out of three pieces of material, a large rectangle used for the skirt of the dress and two shaped pieces of the same size which serve as the bodice and sleeves (fig. 7:20).

The two bodice and sleeve sections are sewn along their lower edge to the skirt with either a simple, open seam or an overcast seam, and under the arms (either an open seam or an overcast seam), but the short edges of the cloth are left open to produce the V-shaped neck opening at both the front and back of the garment. The openings are normally fastened using strings (various lengths and numbers have been recorded) made from

<sup>11</sup> Chassinat and Palanque 1911, pl. XXXIII; Hall 1985, pl. XXXVIII.

<sup>12</sup> Egyptian Museum, Cairo JE 43684. Kamal 1914:171-172, fig. 21; Spiegelberg 1927, pl. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Kamal 1914:172. *Koresha* or *Kresa*, a thin, crinkled fabric, a form of *crêpe*.



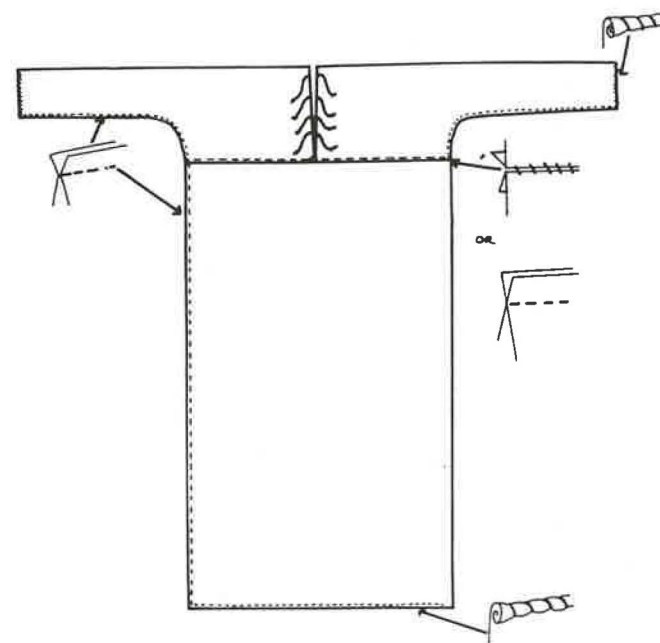


Fig. 7:20 Construction of a typical V-necked dress with sleeves

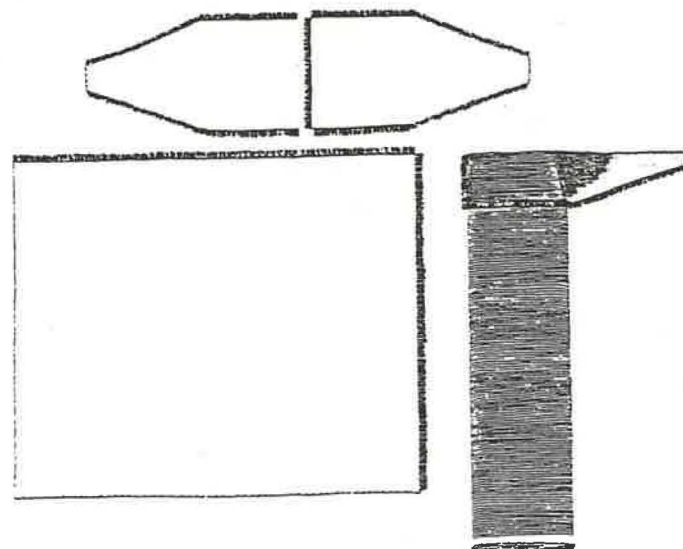


Fig. 7:21 Pattern of a V-necked dress with sleeves following Riefstahl (1970, fig. 6)

twisted flax. The sleeve ends and the bottom of the garment are normally hemmed (either rolled and whipped or simple hem stitching). The skirt is made into a tube by sewing the two short sides together (using either an

open seam or an overcast seam). The resulting seam is placed to the right side of the garment. The three pieces of material are normally sewn together using an open seam.<sup>14</sup> The bottom of the garment is generally either hem stitched, or rolled and whipped.

It would appear from a comparison of the patterns given by Riefstahl of the Naga-ed-Der dress, and that by Hall and Pedrini of the Gebelein dress, that variations occurred in the shape of the yoke and sleeve sections (figs. 7:21-22; Riefstahl 1970, fig. 6; Hall and Pedrini 1984, fig. 1). The Naga-ed-Der example would seem to be far more angular than the one from Gebelein.<sup>15</sup>

In most cases the extant V-necked dresses are pleated with horizontal folds, both in the yoke, sleeve and skirt. The individual folds are about ten centimetres wide (see Hall and Pedrini 1984:138). Needless to say, exceptions do occur. The sleeves of one of the dresses from Tomb N94, Naga-ed-Der, for example, were initially pleated with horizontal folds (accordion pleating) and the lower half of both sleeves was refolded vertically, so giving a herringbone effect.

One curious detail on all the pleated dresses is the line which runs down the front of the skirt section. At first it would appear that the material had been pleated and then sewn together with the pleats not quite matching. However the seams are clearly on the right side of the garments. A solution to this problem was offered by Riefstahl:

It was obviously pleated horizontally after having been folded vertically in four, as four separate panels are now evident with the pleats opening alternately upwards and downwards (Riefstahl 1970:247; followed by Hall and Pedrini 1984:138)

Hall and Pedrini suggested that the Gebelein dress may have been made to measure rather than there being some form of 'off-the-peg' system which is so common nowadays (Hall and Pedrini 1984:138). Although there is no actual proof of this it is clear from Table 1 that there was a considerable variation in size between the garments found at Naga-ed-Der and the Gebelein dress. This point would suggest that garments were made to fit particular women. The similarity in sizes between the Naga-ed-Der dresses,

<sup>14</sup> The Gebelein dress now in Turin was stitched using back stitches and hemming stitch (Hall and Pedrini 1984:136).

<sup>15</sup> In view of the above, Riefstahl's suggestion that the tops of sheath dresses may have been shaped on the loom rather than cut to shape can be called into question, especially as there is no evidence for the production of loom-shaped garments in Egypt before the Graeco/Roman period (Riefstahl 1970:247).

for example, would suggest that they had been made for the same person, while the measurements of the Gebelein dress would indicate that they had originally been worn by a far larger and taller woman.

Visual Evidence for Dresses with V-shaped Necklines and Sleeves

One of the ironies in the study of Pharaonic clothing is the fact that there is a large corpus of dresses with V-shaped necklines and sleeves, but no depictions.

Discussion

Hall and Pedrini suggested that the pleated variety of the V-necked dress "enjoyed only a brief and limited vogue, perhaps because they proved impractical, for the pleats would sag from the weight of the linen, or

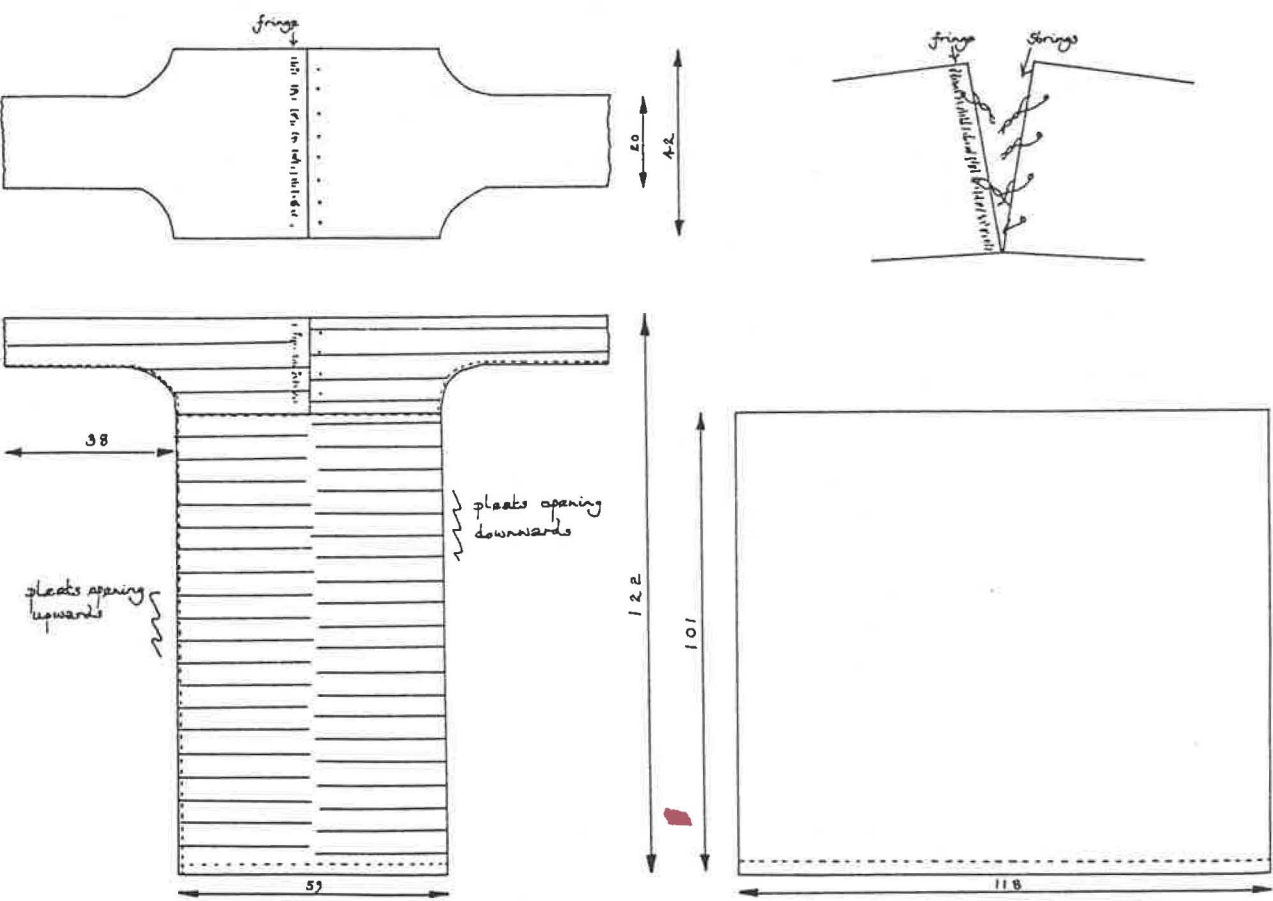


Fig. 7:22 Pattern of a V-necked dress with sleeves following Hall and Pedrini (1981, fig. 1)

Table 1. Measurements of V-necked dresses<sup>16</sup>  
(approx. size in centimetres)

Garment	1*	2*	3*	4*	5*	6*	7*	8+	9*	10+	11+
length shoulder to hem	76	72	81	74	103	122	139	152	-	142	156
width of skirt	54	44	47	43	-	59	55	-	39	38	47
depth of yoke from shoulder	13	12	19	13	13	22	22	20	17	30	25
width of yoke at shoulder	54	43	49	42	64	67	84	-	58	64	72
from neck opening to wrist	16	11	13	12	-	20	16	12	24	21	23
circumference of wrist opening											

1 Boston 13.3966A      7 Louvre E 12026      \* pleated garment  
 2 Boston 13.3966B      8 Gebelein example, Brunton      + unpleated garment  
 3 Boston 13.3966C      9 UC 28614i  
 4 Boston 34.56a      10 UC 31182  
 5 Cairo JE 43684      11 UC 31183  
 6 Turin 14087

<sup>16</sup> The figures in Table 1 are taken from: Spiegelberg 1927:155; Riefstahl 1970:258; Hall 1982:30; Hall and Pedrini 1984:137 and my own observations.



because they were aesthetically unappealing, as they are both clumsy and ugly" (Hall and Pedrini 1984:139. See Riefstahl 1970:248 for similar comments).

However, the dates of the finds given at the beginning of this section, namely, from the First to the Eleventh Dynasty, indicate that this garment was in use for at least a thousand years. Even if the Tarkhan example is not included since there is no evidence of pleating on the skirt, then we are still left with a period of time which ranges from the Sixth to the Eleventh Dynasty. This may not be long in terms of Egyptian history, but it would argue against the suggestion that the garment appeared only briefly and then vanished as a result of its being ugly and impractical. It would seem more likely that it vanished because it was replaced by a more versatile garment, a point which will be returned to in the next chapter.

Hall and Pedrini also suggested that these dresses may have represented a "purely local fashion dictated by the adverse cold of the winters in these regions" (Hall and Pedrini 1984:139). This argument was based on the fact that these garments (the Gebelein examples were excluded), were found in provincial cemeteries confined to a narrow area of the Fayum and the northern part of Upper Egypt. Another explanation for this apparent anomaly may simply lie in the lack of detailed excavation reports and interest in objects made out of cloth. It should also be noted that Gebelein lies to the south of Luxor, and is thus at least 700 km from the Fayum region, and that two dresses are known to have been found there.

Nevertheless, the lack of representations of this type of garment is curious, in view of the accuracy with which other types of garments are depicted.

As noted earlier in this chapter, Hall argued that the garment from Tomb 13, Asyut, was originally worn by a man (Hall 1985:238). Her hypothesis was based on the size of the garment, plus the fact that a battle-axe and walking stick were found among the grave goods.<sup>17</sup> As can be seen from Table 1, however, the size of the garment is not unusual when compared with similar garments from known female graves, although such a woman would have been larger and with proportionally longer arms than, for example, the owner of the Naga-ed-Der dresses. The apparent dichotomy can simply be seen as the difference in size between, for example, a modern British size 10 garment and one sized 24. The point is further strengthened by the fact that none of the other dresses come from known male graves. In

<sup>17</sup> The battle-axe is now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (no number available), while the stick, plus a female figurine from the tomb, are in the Louvre Museum (E11984 and E12003 respectively).

addition, the range of grave goods found in Tomb 13 also includes statuettes of women and pottery, neither of which were classed as male or female orientated (Chassinat and Palanque 1911:162). Of greater significance, however, is the fact that there was a total of four coffins in the chamber, all unsexed, and that the grave goods were near, but not in the coffin with the garments. It is also possible that old garments had been used either to cushion or wrap the body regardless of its sex. There is no direct evidence, therefore, to prove that the battle-axe and walking stick actually belonged to the burial with the garments.

Hall suggested that the Deshasha dresses now in the Petrie Museum were specially designed for the tomb because they were far too long and narrow to have been worn in real life (Hall 1982:33). Yet, a comparison of their sizes with those given in Table 1 indicates that they were not significantly narrow. The length does present more of a problem. Nevertheless, if it was originally intended that the garments were to be pleated, but for some reason this had not occurred (perhaps they had been washed but nobody had the time or inclination to repleat the dresses), then this might account for their apparently undue length.

#### (C) BEAD-NET DRESSES

The last specific dress type to be discussed is the bead-net dress. As the name suggests these garments were made out of beads strung together in geometric patterns, usually diamonds. It is likely that the dresses were normally worn over a cloth dress of some form.

##### *Surviving Examples of Bead-net Dresses*

So far only two bead-net dresses have been identified. The remains of the first dress were found in mastaba G7440Z, Giza, by a team from Harvard University in 1927 (BMFA #27.1548). The burial was given a Fourth Dynasty date, possibly from the period of Khufu. The dress was found in the grave of a woman and consists of a large quantity of cylinder, disc and floral beads in dark and light blue, and green (pl. 31). The garment has recently been reconstructed by M. Jick, based on the position of the beads, on the remains of threading and on contemporary depictions of women wearing beaded dresses.

The second dress was found in a Fifth Dynasty tomb (no. 978) at Qau in Middle Egypt (pl. 32; Petrie Museum, UC 17743; Hall 1981b; 1986a:64-65). The beads were in a box lying in a plundered, mud-brick lined grave. The robbers, however, seem to have missed a niche at the southern end of the



grave which contained the box, plus four alabaster vases, two of which were shaped like granaries.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Construction of the Bead-net Dresses*

The remains of the Giza dress consist of a line of vertically arranged, long cylinder beads in dark blue, lying across the chest of the mummy (Jick 1988:79, figs. 44-45). At the bottom of the skirt there were forty-two floral beads in dark and light blue. In between the two rows there were large quantities of long cylinder beads in a light colour, probably green, and small disc beads in blue and green. The net was restrung with three disc beads (blue, green, blue) separating the long cylinder beads. As reconstructed, the garment is 113 x 44 cm in size. Although traces of cloth were found underneath the beads, Jick suggested that these were not the remains of a cloth dress, but rather the mummy wrappings (Jick 1988:79). There was no evidence of sewing.

Like the Giza dress, the bead-net dress found at Qau had to be re-threaded. This was initially carried out by E. M. Burgess in the 1960's. According to Hall, however, there are still several small boxes of unthreaded beads in the Petrie Museum collection (Hall 1981b:39). So it is likely that the Qau dress was originally slightly larger than it is now.

The following description of how the Qau dress was reconstructed is taken from R. Hall's work on Egyptian textiles:

Partial rethreading has created a wide-meshed network of blue and black faience cylinder beads with green faience ring beads placed in between. A string of *Mitra* shells at the bottom would have rattled when the wearer danced. Two small caps were provided for wearing over the breasts, made out of blue faience with the nipples in black faience. Four small holes were pierced around the base for threading into the appropriate position in the network (Hall 1986a:65)

The net is *ca.* 51.0 cm in length by *ca.* 57.0 cm wide (Hall 1981b:39). The breast caps are 4.3 cm in diameter.

Several pairs of 'caps' were found in two tombs at Deir el-Bersheh dating to the First Intermediate Period (Kamal 1901:34,38). G. Brunton suggested that these caps were probably similar to those found at Qau (Brunton 1927, I, 64). Unfortunately, in the el-Bersheh excavation report A. B. Kamal simply described one pair of these objects as "deux demi-sphères en émail vert" which he suggested may have been the ends of collars (Kamal 1901:38). As

<sup>18</sup> Brunton 1927, I, 23, 64, pl. XXIX. The alabaster jars are now in the Petrie Museum, London, UC 17739 and UC 17742.

no further details were given, and there is no detailed illustration, Brunton's hypothesis cannot be taken any further. Nevertheless, it would seem likely that they had originally been used in this manner.

It has been suggested by various authors that the beads used for this type of dress were either woven into or sewn onto a ground material (compare Riefstahl 1944:11). Cloth with beads woven into it is well-known from the Pharaonic period, but the beads tend to be of the small disc type, rather than the cylinder beads used for the two dresses described above.

#### *Visual Evidence for Bead-net Dresses*

The use of bead-net dresses can be seen in a number of reliefs, and statues, from the Old Kingdom onwards. Generally, the net appears to have been placed over a wrap-around dress of some type with two shoulder straps, or over a V-necked dress without sleeves. It is likely that bead-net dresses were worn in order to create the effect of a more ornate dress, perhaps one decorated with precious or semi-precious stones. In addition, the sensual aspect of these dresses should not be forgotten.

Several Old Kingdom group statues also depict bead-net garments with breast caps. Two Fifth Dynasty examples were found at Saqqara. The first statue comes from Mastaba C22 (Borchardt 1911, I, 79, pl. 23). The woman is wearing a V-necked dress with an elaborately patterned bodice (fig. 7:23).

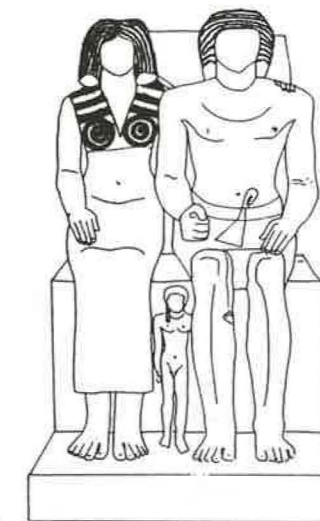


Fig. 7:23 Lady wearing a dress with an elaborate bodice and breast caps (mastaba C22, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty, after Borchardt 1911, I, 79, pl. 23)





Fig. 7:24 Lady wearing a dress with an elaborate bodice and breast caps (Louvre A102, Old Kingdom; after Borchardt 1911, I, 80, pl. 23)

The breast caps were coloured red, with green nipples. The second example was worn by the wife of Khemka.<sup>19</sup> The breast caps are in light and dark blue (fig. 7:24). Only a half bodice was worn with a deep V-shape between the breasts. There is no evidence of shoulder straps, either on the bead-net dress or the undergarment.

It would appear from Old and Middle Kingdom statuettes that the length of beaded dresses could vary considerably. The dress worn by the women from Mastaba C22 mentioned above was long and reached down to her ankles, while the skirts worn by a group of three serving girls are short (Chassinat and Palanque 1911, pl. IV, IX and X). The three statuettes came from the Middle Kingdom tomb of Nakhti, Asyut (see figs. 6:6a-c; Chassinat and Palanque 1911, Tomb 7, 29-154). The skirt depicted in the first statuette is made up of what appears to be a beaded belt around the waist, followed by eight rows of alternating light and dark cylinder beads which end in a line of long beads, apparently with rounded beads at the end. The skirt only reaches halfway down the thigh. It was worn over a long, wrap-around dress which reached to the ankles of the figure. The second skirt is perhaps more unusual. It was attached to a belt or sash around the waist of a dress on the left-hand side. The right-hand side was allowed to hang down. The bodices and straps depicted consist of cylinder and round beads, which are

<sup>19</sup> Louvre Museum A102. Borchardt 1911, I, 80, no. 101, pl. 23. Erman described this garment as embroidered (Erman 1894:213).

strung vertically and horizontally. It would be interesting to know whether, as suggested previously, the straps and skirts were two separate items, or whether the beads of the skirt and straps were sewn together. Until actual examples are found, this point will have to remain open.

By the New Kingdom the number of bead-dresses depicted begins to decline, except for those worn by goddesses and queens. It would appear that such dresses had taken on a more symbolic usage, perhaps in keeping with the use of bead-nets over mummies as some form of magical protection (see Taylor 1988:175, no. 125, fig. 125d). Their use therefore falls outside the bounds of this guide to 'everyday' clothing.

Finally, several authors have suggested that the use of short bead-net dresses, presumably without an undergarment, was associated with dancers (see for example, Hall 1982:39; 1986a:65). Indeed the nature of the dress now in the Petrie Museum, especially with the shell rattles, would make it a suitable garment for dancers. As yet, however, I have been unable to find a representation of a dancer wearing such a garment.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### BAG TUNICS

After discussing in the previous chapter a range of typically female garments, I will now turn to a form of clothing which was worn by both men and women, namely the so-called bag-tunic. The term bag-tunic derives, literally, from its shape: a bag formed by a long rectangle which was folded in half and sewn up the sides (see below).<sup>1</sup> Although constructed in an identical manner, two varieties can be distinguished by their length. The first form (A), the full-length bag-tunic, was worn by both men and women and performed the basic function of covering the torso from the shoulders to, at a minimum, the knees or more commonly the ankles. The second form (B), the short bag-tunic, was only worn by men and covered the body from the shoulders to the buttocks or less frequently, the knees. Both forms could be worn by themselves or with other garments.

#### (A) FULL-LENGTH BAG TUNICS

The full-length bag-tunic was one of the most common garments to be found in the wardrobes of men, women and children during much of the Pharaonic period.<sup>2</sup> Examples were found in a number of tombs and settlement sites, and it is clear from these plus pictorial sources that they were worn by most Egyptians regardless of age or rank. Nevertheless, variations do occur, especially in the quality and thickness of the material used. Such differences, however, may simply be due to changes in seasonal wear, rather than reflecting the social position or occupation of the owner.

<sup>1</sup> Janssen suggested that the modern Arabic word *ghalabiyah* should be used to describe the *mss* or bag-tunic as it "plays virtually the same role" (Janssen 1975:260). The construction of a *ghalabiyah*, however is markedly different from that of a bag-tunic. In addition, male and female *ghalabiyah*'s are not made in the same way, unlike the uni-sex bag-tunic. I would suggest, therefore, that the term *ghalabiyah* should not be used in this context.

<sup>2</sup> Bag tunics are sometimes described in reports as "shirts". See for example, Smith 1912:74-75; Hayes 1959, II, 159. Tilke described it as a "kalasiris or a sewn linen chiton" (Tilke 1990:10). For a discussion concerning the Egyptian term for this garment, see Hall 1981a.

For example, of the seventeen bag-tunics found in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of the architect Kha, sixteen were of fine material while the seventeenth was described by Schiaparelli as being of thicker "winter" quality cloth (Schiaparelli 1927:93).

#### *Surviving Examples of Full-length Bag-tunics*

In the following description of full-length bag-tunics, the garments are listed on the basis of one criterion, namely, that they derive from known contexts and thus provide a relatively firm dating framework.

Although short bag-tunics are known from the Middle Kingdom, so far no examples of full-length tunics appear to have been excavated from this period. On the other hand numerous tunics have come from New Kingdom sources. For example, four tunics were found in the joint tomb of Hatnefer and Ramose, the parents of Senenmut, plus two others (Sheikh 'Abd el-Qurna; Eighteenth Dynasty).<sup>3</sup> The body of Hatnefer was wrapped in eighty bandages, twelve pads and four sets of trussing tapes, in addition to two bag-tunics which were wrapped around her waist.<sup>4</sup> A more detailed description of her "loincloth" was given by the excavators:

The body itself was clad in a loincloth composed of two linen shirts ... their tops tied around the waist, the tails brought up between the legs and tucked into the waist loop (Lansing and Hayes 1937:20)

Hayes later described the tunics as being made out of a large piece of cloth with a keyhole shape cut out for the neck openings (Hayes 1959, II:287). The neck slit was fastened using a pair of ties.

A third tunic from the tomb was found wrapped around one of the canopic jars in Hatnefer's canopic chest "D" (MMA 36.3.54). According to the catalogue cards of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, it has "irregular dark and light stripes produced by accidental (?) differences in the color of the warp".

In addition to the Hatnefer tunics, there are references to several other tunics found in the same tomb, but apparently belonging to the other burials. An "old shirt" (EM 66241) was found among the wrappings of

<sup>3</sup> Lansing and Hayes 1937:18-20; Hayes 1959, II, 187, fig. 103. The group is currently being prepared for publication by P. F. Dorman, The Oriental Institute, The University of Chicago and N. Kajitani, The Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York. My thanks are due to P. F. Dorman for providing me with information about the Sheikh Abd el-Qurna bag-tunics.

<sup>4</sup> The two shirts are now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, accession numbers unknown. Lansing and Hayes 1937:24,26.



Ramose, the father of Senenmut. Unfortunately, no further details were given and according to P. F. Dorman it is likely that the rest of the "wrappings" were discarded. Finally, a "linen shirt" was found in the coffin of the singer Harmose.<sup>5</sup> This garment is 120 cm long and 73 cm wide with a hem at the front and a starting border at the back. The neck edge is rolled and whipped stitched.

Considerably more tunics have been found in slightly later New Kingdom tombs, notably Theban tomb no. 1379; the tomb of Kha, Deir el-Medina (see above), and the tomb of Tut'ankhamun.

In Tomb 1379, for example, a single bag-tunic was found in a large basket. The tunic was described by Bruyère as being new and that it was: "Une chemise de lin écru et quatre pagnes en pointes semblent les seuls vêtements masculin que contenaient les tombes de l'est" (Bruyère 1937:59-60, fig. 31:1). The published photograph clearly shows the cut-out neck and ties (pl. 33).

At least twenty-six "shirts" were found in the tomb of Kha the architect, referred to previously (pl. 34a; Schiaparelli 1927:93). All these garments are typical full-length bag-tunics, although there are variations. For example, some of them are decorated with tapestry and compound weave bands, others have sleeves. All, however, have a cut-out neck and small ties (Schiaparelli 1927:67-69).

Perhaps some of the best-known examples of bag-tunics come from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun.<sup>6</sup> According to Carter's cards of objects from Tut'ankhamun's tomb, at least twelve "robes", all bag-tunics, were placed inside the tomb.<sup>7</sup> These include ceremonial garments, decoratively woven and embroidered tunics, as well as plain examples (pl. 35). The basic form of all the identifiable garments was, again, a long piece of cloth which was folded in half and then sewn up the sides.

Fragments of bag-tunics have been found at the fourteenth century Workmen's Village site at Amarna (Vogelsang-Eastwood, in press). More details concerning these finds are given below.

Two tunics were found wrapped around the early twelfth century B.C. mummy of "Nakht the weaver" (pl. 36; provenance unknown; ROM 914.4.3.1 and 914.4.3.2. According to N. B. Millet, several of the pads contained in the wrappings proved to be more or less complete garments,

<sup>5</sup> Harmose's "shirt" is now in the Textile Museum, Washington, 7.58.5; ex. Metropolitan Museum 36.3.171.

<sup>6</sup> See for example, Carter 1933, III, 124-126, pl. 124-125, pl. XXXIX; Pfister 1937; Crowfoot and Davies 1941:24.

<sup>7</sup> Murray and Nuttall 1963; Carter 1923:124-126. Carter 3671 = Cairo, textile 642.

including "two large sleeveless tuniclike [sic] robes of a type familiar to us from wall paintings and sculptures".<sup>8</sup> One of the garments is complete, but three quarters of the other are missing (see below; ROM 914.4.3.2). The condition of the second garment would suggest that it had been torn up just before it was wrapped around the body. Nevertheless, because the neck opening, one selvedge edge and the hem are still extant, it has been possible to give the dimensions of the garment (see Table 2).

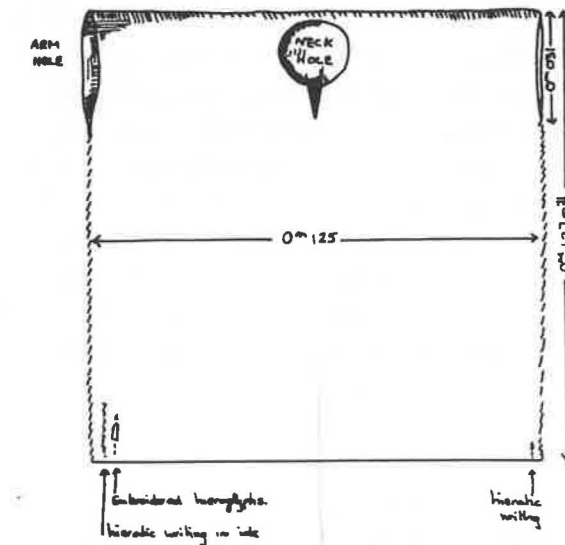


Fig. 8:1 Bag-tunic from the tomb of Seti II (ca. 1214-1204 B.C.; after Smith 1912:74-75, diag. 16)

Two undecorated "shirts" were found wrapped around the mummy of Seti II (ca. 1214-1204 B.C.) (fig. 8:1). Both were described by G. Elliot Smith as being a sleeveless form of bag-tunic made out of "very fine muslin".<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, no further details of these garments are available.

<sup>8</sup> Millet, *et al.*, 1980:73. According to Salmon, Nahkt's tunic was a festival tunic, which was simply derived from a store of "mortuary cloth" and was not originally owned by Nahkt (Salmon 1982:181-2). There is no direct evidence for either suggestions. The question how much cloth wrapped around a mummy originally belonged to the deceased or his family, and how much came from the 'mortuary' is of interest, but cannot be discussed here.

<sup>9</sup> Smith 1912:74-75, diag. 16. Unfortunately, when Smith was preparing his manuscript for publication he was unable to present further details as the tunics had been lost.

At least three examples were found by Petrie in a Twentieth Dynasty burial at Kahun.<sup>10</sup> According to Petrie's notes he found "three or four perfect shirts", which had been neatly folded up and placed between the bandages of the mummy. A rough sketch of one such shirt was given and it is clear that Petrie had discovered a small cache of full-length bag-tunics (Hall 1980:32).

A bag-tunic now in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels, was given to the museum by R. Mond.<sup>11</sup> The garment comes from an apparently unpublished excavation conducted in 1924 at Sheikh 'Abd el-Qurnah. More precisely, the tunic was found in the tomb of a female singer of Amun and dates to the Twenty-fifth Dynasty. It is 117 cm wide by 118 cm long and has whipped side seams and a rolled and whipped neckline. The bottom edges are finished with a warp-fringe about 5 cm deep.

Finally, the remains of a child's tunic were found during the excavations at the Mentuhotep Temple, Thebes (pl. 37; MMA 25.3.215. Scott 1944, fig. 22). It comes from an intrusive burial (no. 21) on the south side of the temple and dates to sometime between the late Twenty-Sixth to Thirtieth Dynasty.<sup>12</sup> The tunic has a fringe at the bottom of the garment and strings at the neck. The side seams were torn off in antiquity and the garment was used to wrap a body.

#### *Construction of a Bag-tunic*

A typical adult full-length bag-tunic is made out of a large rectangle of cloth which is folded in half (fig. 8:2). The sides are then sewn up except for about 30 cm at the top for the armholes. A hole is cut out of the cloth at the front middle for the head opening and a slit of between 10 and 20 cm is cut down the front of the tunic which serves as the neck opening. A rolled and whipped hem goes around the neck and head opening, with a simple hem around at the bottom of the garment.

<sup>10</sup> Hall 1981a:30; based on Petrie MSS journal, 26th 1889- 27th June 1890. See also Hall 1980:32. Petrie also presented the Staatliche Museen, Berlin, with a linen bag-tunic (10966; Berlin 1899:214). According to the Museum the tunic came from the Gurob excavations of 1890. My thanks to C.-B. Arnst for confirming the existence of this object. Other bag-tunics in the Museum collection are nos. 740 and 741, which came to Berlin as part of the Passalacqua collection in 1827. They were found in a Theban burial, "zusammengefaltet unter den Binden über der Brust einer Mumie gefunden" (inventory book).

<sup>11</sup> Brussels E.6205. The information about the garment is derived from the Museum's accession cards. This particular bag-tunic was briefly mentioned by R. Hall in her article on V-necked dresses (Hall 1985:236, fn. 3).

<sup>12</sup> Accession records, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Extant selvages at the sides indicate that a simple seam was constructed. If no selvages were present then a flat seam of some kind was used for the side seams. If the tunic was sleeveless and without a selvedge, then the arm regions were hemmed. If a selvedge was included then no stitching was required.

It was indicated above that a typical tunic has a round neck opening which was cut out. Variations, however, do occur. The Tarkhan tunic now in the Petrie Museum, for example, has a simple vertical slit about 38 cm in length. The area around the neck opening and shoulders has been strengthened with a region of couching (see below). A tunic now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, has two slits: one cut horizontally across the shoulders, and one running vertically down the front of the garment (RMO Leiden, Leeman E1).

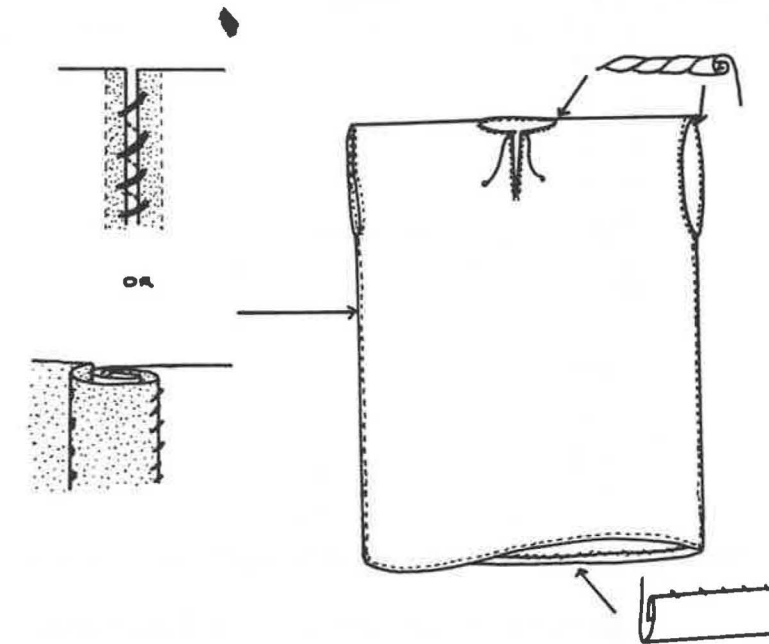


Fig. 8:2 Construction of a bag-tunic

Several different methods of making the neck opening have been recorded. The most common is a single slit, neatened with a rolled and whipped hem. In the case of the ROM 914.4.36a, a one centimetre wide band was cut out of the garment and used as the neck opening. It was not neatened.



The most common means of fastening the neck opening was by using two small string ties, one on either side of the slit at the top (see pl. 34b).<sup>13</sup> Examples of this technique were found at the Workmen's Village, as well as on several of the tunics from the tombs of Kha and Tut'ankhamun.<sup>14</sup> Another form of fastening found at Amarna is more unusual and involves the use of a 'button' made from the bound corner of the neck opening and a corresponding small loop on the other side of the opening (Amarna, nos <2674> and <1560>; pl. 38; Vogelsang-Eastwood, in press).

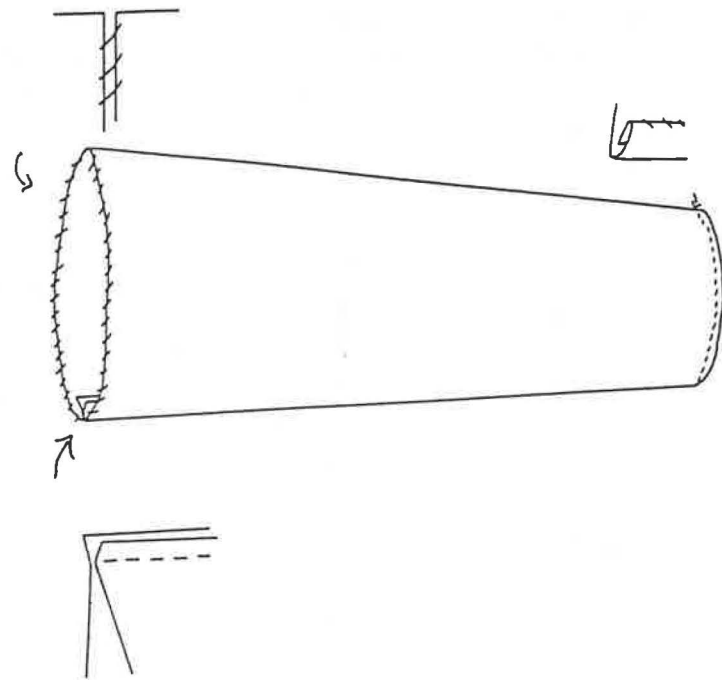


Fig. 8:3 Construction of a typical long sleeve showing the position of the underarm seam

It is known from garments in the tombs of Tut'ankhamun and Kha that bag-tunics were sometimes worn with sleeves (see pl. 40). It would also appear from finds from Amarna that both long and short sleeves were in use during the New Kingdom. The construction of sleeves seems to vary

<sup>13</sup> The statue of an official of the New Kingdom was described by Simpson as wearing a tunic with short sleeves and "drawstring" (Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 1972-360; Simpson 1987:36-37). It is in fact a sleeveless bag-tunic with tie strings. The strings are firmly attached to the neck opening and thus cannot be drawn up.

<sup>14</sup> Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 68; Crowfoot and Davies 1941, fig. XIV; Amarna no. <4422> (the neck opening has been hemmed rather than neatened with a rolled hem; Vogelsang-Eastwood, in press).

according to their size.<sup>15</sup> One long sleeve was found at the Workmen's Village, Amarna. Because of its size, it probably came from a woman's garment. It was made out of a single length of cloth, which was shaped so that it narrowed at the wrist (fig. 8:3). It has a single seam down its length which went along the lower or inside edge of the sleeve in a similar manner to most modern sleeves. Petrie found a pair of similarly constructed, but more neatly sewn, sleeves at Gurob in 1889 (Hall 1980:29). The Gurob sleeves were given a mid-Eighteenth Dynasty date. The second type of sleeve (both long and short forms) from Amarna is again shaped, but this time there is a flat seam which was placed at the centre back (fig. 8:4).

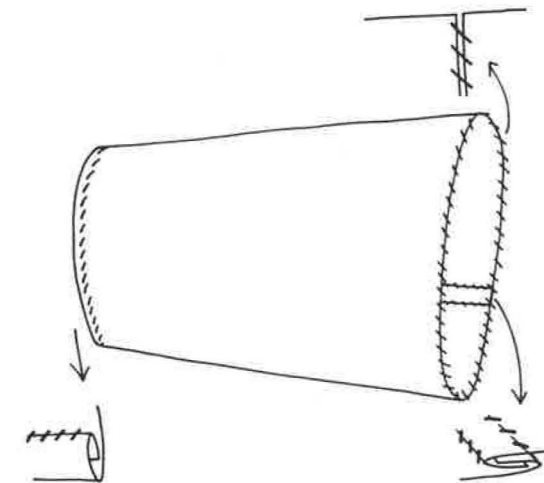


Fig. 8:4 Construction of a typical short sleeve showing the position of the underarm seam

R. Hall suggested that sleeves were worn during the winter when it was cold and that they may have been removed during warmer weather (Hall 1980:35). So far, however, no sleeves or garments have been found with evidence of multiple sewing. Nevertheless, this possibility should not be ruled out.

The size of the full-length bag-tunics can vary from thigh to ankle length. They were also made sufficiently wide so that they could be easily taken on and off. As a result there exists a considerable variety in the width of these garments, as can be seen in Table 2.

The majority of surviving tunics are undecorated, but it is clear from a number of examples that various decorative elements were used, for

<sup>15</sup> A total of seven sleeves were found at the site (Vogelsang-Eastwood in press).

example, bead work, sequins of gold and faience, applied pattern bands, and embroidery. The basic forms of decoration are:

*Fringes:* Although material with both warp and weft fringes was woven, only cloth with warp fringes appears to have been used for bag-tunics. Several tunics, for example the child's tunic found at Thebes (see pl. 37); one of Tut'ankhamun's tunics (ME 642); the tunic from Tarkhan (UC 28616Ci) and the Singer of Amun's tunic (Brussels E.6205), have fringes (all ca. 5 cm deep) around the lower hem. In some cases the warp threads were twisted (E.6205), while in others the fringes were made from plaited warp threads (ME 642).

*Coloured garments:* It would appear from both pictorial and written sources that there were coloured bag-tunics (see below). So far, however, although many fragments of dyed cloth have been recorded, only one coloured tunic has been found. This is the "shirt of yellow linen" found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun.<sup>16</sup> According to Riefstahl it is:

[a] yellow tapestry-woven tunic, striped green and brown, with bands of flying ducks in green and another ornamented in rows of rosettes, with a band of inscription down the front and a tapestry-woven collar ... which seems to be a woven version of the usual floral broad collar. (Riefstahl 1944:25)

So far this tunic appears to be unique in its use of a coloured ground with woven details.

The most common method of decorating a tunic is the use of coloured threads in stripes. Two forms of this type of decoration have been noted. The first example is to be found on one of the plain tunics from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun, now on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The patterning comes in the form of three broad stripes (in the warp) on one side of the tunic. The stripes go down the front and back, but are not duplicated on the opposite side of the garment. The colouring matter has not yet been analyzed, but the dark brown appearance is consistent with faded madder. Similar stripes in the warp have been found on textile fragments from the almost contemporary Workmen's Village at Amarna (Vogelsang-Eastwood, in press). It is likely therefore that this form of decoration was relatively common.

The second method of using colour is characterized by the use of coloured stripes both within the selvages and along the transverse edges.

<sup>16</sup> Egyptian Museum, Cairo, ME 1668. Murray and Nuttall 1963, no. 50a. Crowfoot and Davies 1941:116; Riefstahl 1944:25, fig. 35.

Table 2. Measurements of full-length bag-tunics in various collections, listed in chronological order<sup>17</sup> (in centimetres; all dates are approximate)

Tunic	Provenance	Date	Length	Width
Hatnefer MMA 36.3.54	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	18th Dyn.	128.0	88.0
Harmose TM 7.58.5	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	18th Dyn.	120	70
Tut'ankhamun Cairo Museum M 367j Cairo Museum 50a Cairo Museum 50j Victoria and Albert Museum	Thebes	1333-1323	113.5 137.0 138.0 135.0	95.0* 85.0 103.0 88.0
Kha Turin 8530 Turin 8531	Thebes	18th Dyn	121.0 128.0	109.0 101.0
Seti II (Cairo Museum)	Thebes	19th Dyn.	127.0	125.0
Nakht (ROM 910.4.45a)	unknown	20th Dyn.	124.0	125.5
Brussels E.6205	Sheikh Abd el-Qurna	25th Dyn	118.0	117.0
BM 2565	unknown	unknown	118.0	110.0
RMO E1	unknown	unknown	140.0	115.0

\* not including the sleeves (131.5 cm with sleeves)  
See Table 4 for the measurements of the short bag-tunic

A typical example is a bag-tunic now in the RMO, Leiden, which has a narrow blue stripe down the selvedge and a similar band along the edge just above a fringe (pl. 39; RMO Leemans E1; provenance unknown).

*Applied woven bands:* Carter described several of Tut'ankhamun's tunics as being decorated with tapestry bands (pl. 40; Carter 1933:III, 124-126). In fact, however, the majority of these garments have decorative compound weave

<sup>17</sup> Based on Smith 1912:74-75; Schiaparelli 1927:93; Hayes 1959:187; Hall 1981a:31 and personal observations.



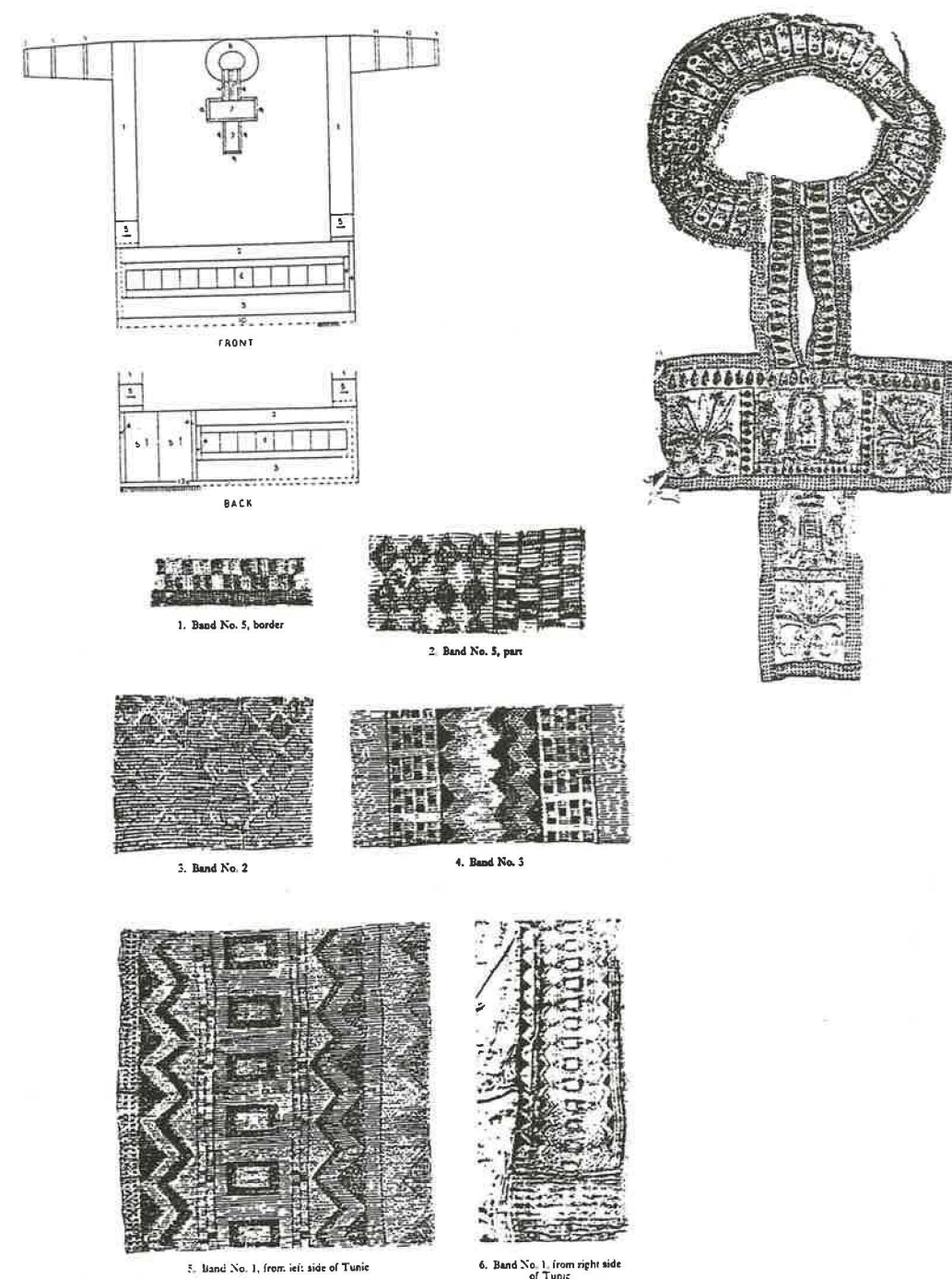


Fig. 8:5 Tunic no. 367i (Cairo, JdE 62625) from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (after Crowfoot and Davies, 1941, fig. 1; pls. XV and XVIII). (a) Layout of Tut'ankhamun's bag-tunic showing the position of the woven and embroidered bands; (b) the embroidered neck band from the tunic of Tut'ankhamun; (c) woven bands from the tunic of Tut'ankhamun

bands sewn onto them.<sup>18</sup> According to G. Crowfoot, numerous bands were applied to tunic 367i, both on the front and back. The diagram given in Figure 8:5a-c gives an impression of the range of patterns found on this garment, plus their location. The bands used for Tut'ankhamun's tunics were predominantly blue in colour, but touches of red, green, black and white also occur (Crowfoot and Davies 1941:116). In addition to tunic 367i, the tomb contents also included several similarly woven collars which were probably originally destined to be worn with a bag-tunic of some kind (Murray and Nuttall 1963, nos. 21o, 21aa).

Table 3. Bag-tunics for children

Tunic	Provenance	Date	Length	Width
Tut'ankhamun tomb, no. 21 Egyptian Museum	Thebes	1333-1323	80.0	50.0
child's tunic MMA 25.3.215	Thebes	26-30 Dyn	65.0	75.0
child's tunic RMO, Leiden prov. acc. 233	-	-	98.0	51.0

Another example of a tunic with applied compound weave bands was found among the group of garments from the tomb of Kha (Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 69). It is not, however, as elaborate as that found in Tut'ankhamun's tomb. The Kha tunic has an applied band around the neck which was crudely sewn, plus similarly patterned bands down either side of the garment and along the hem (pl. 42).

Tapestry woven: One of the tunics found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun included tapestry woven details. This is the yellow tunic described previously. The tapestry detail was a collar which Carter described as being a "hawk with outspread wings", but which Riefstahl suggested was a "usual floral broad collar".<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> For a detailed discussion of the woven and embroidered bands from Tut'ankhamun's tunic (367i), see Pfister 1937, and Crowfoot and Davies 1941. Crowfoot describes this type of band as a decorative warp-woven form (Crowfoot and Davies 1941:117-125).

<sup>19</sup> Carter 1923, I, pl. LXXVIIIb; Riefstahl 1944:25. Another tapestry woven object from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun was a quiver with a pattern of lotus flowers and buds (48x; 61570).

It has been suggested that the tapestry cartouche and bands originally from the tomb of Thutmosis IV, may have come from garments (Carter and Newberry 1904, 144; nos. 46526-46529). However, as they were ripped off their original ground material, it is now impossible to say whether or not they represent garment decorations.

**Embroidery:** Embroidered decoration, namely the use of extra threads which are worked with a needle into the cloth, usually in a decorative manner, after the latter has been woven, is a rare form of Pharaonic decoration (see fig. 8:5).<sup>20</sup> One of the few well documented examples is tunic 367i from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun which was described above. According to Crowfoot and Davies two types of embroidery stitches, namely chain and outline stitch, were used to produce designs of palmettes, griffins, sphinxes, and hunting scenes with lions, dogs, gazelles, ibexes and bulls (Crowfoot and Davies 1941:126-127, pl. XX).

Several of the tunics from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun include applied decorations. For example, garment no. 46gg was described as being "decorated with gold sequins", while no. 367j was a "linen robe with auxiliary tapestry woven ornaments and open needlework".<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the bag-tunic from Tut'ankhamun's tomb, there are several other examples which show some form of applied decoration. One of these is the aforementioned tunic which was wrapped around the body of Seti II (ca. 1214-1204 B.C.) and which has an embroidered cartouche in one corner of the garment front (see fig. 8:1). According to G. E. Smith, an oval or cartouche enclosed the name of Merneptah which had been embroidered in red and blue thread.<sup>22</sup> It is questionable, however, whether this should be regarded as a form of decoration or simply as an identification mark. Of the two suggestions, the latter would seem the more likely. The situation is made more complex as there are also two lines of script in ink on the garment. Unfortunately, the garments have been lost so this point cannot be explored further. Several tunics have been published which include regions of couching. One of the most elaborate is the example from Tarkan now in the Petrie Museum (fig. 8:6; Hall 1981a:33-34; see below for more infor-

<sup>20</sup> Needles made from silver, bronze/copper or fish bones have been found at various Pharaonic sites in Egypt. See for example, Vogelsang-Eastwood (in press).

<sup>21</sup> Murray and Nuttall 1963:3,13. For a discussion about the problems encountered with respect to the poor condition of the decorated tunics, see Carter 1923, I, 168-169. The textiles and garments from the tomb are currently being investigated by the author of this book and J. van Haeringen.

<sup>22</sup> Smith 1912:75. Merneptah was a son of Ramesses II and later became pharaoh in his own right (ca. 1224-1214 B.C.)

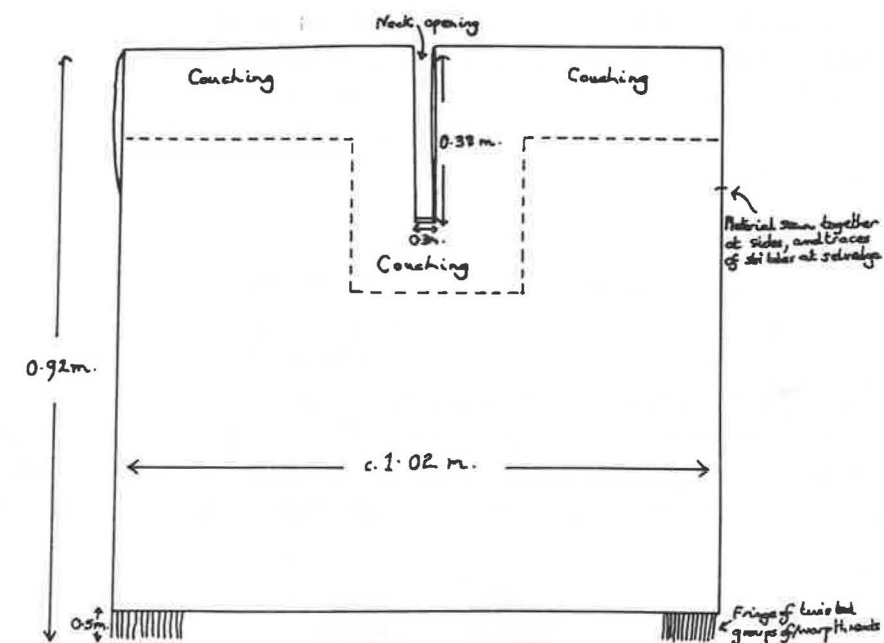


Fig. 8:6 Bag-tunic from Tarkhan showing the position of the couching used for strengthening and mending the garment (after Hall 1981a:33-34)

mation about this garment). It has additional flax threads (undyed) added to the front and back of the garment around the neck opening and shoulder lines. These lines have been laid on the surface of the cloth in the weft direction and then couched down across the warp threads. Hall suggested that the couching was used to give shape to the extra material. She compared it with traditional agricultural smocks from the eighteenth to the twentieth century in England (Hall 1981a:34). Rows of similar stitching, however, can be found on a number of other textiles, not just garment pieces, in other collections, and it is more likely that they were lines of reinforcement for areas of cloth liable to heavy wear or for places where the cloth was already thinning.

Finally, mention should be made of a bag-tunic in the University of Tübingen's collection (Brunner-Traut and Brunner 1981:206-207). The garment, without a known provenance, is extremely large and the question has arisen whether it was actually worn or whether it had some other function. The tunic is 318 cm long and 170 cm wide. Since the cloth is folded in half the complete length of cloth is about 636 cm. It is, therefore,



considerably larger than any of the bag-tunics listed in Table 2. The position of the neck opening is not in line with the shoulder fold. This would have made it difficult to put on and wear. It is unlikely, therefore, that it could have been worn in real life. Its appearance, however, especially with a lower than normal neck opening, is similar to the "tunics" given as offerings to certain deities, notably the goddess Hathor. So, it is possible that the Tübingen tunic was in fact an offering of some kind rather than a garment meant for everyday wear.

#### *Depictions of Full-length Bag-tunics*

In order to find out how these bag-tunics were actually worn it is necessary to look at various representations such as tomb paintings and statues. Certain problems exist when using such sources of information, notably, the possibility that the artists did not always depict the bagginess of the tunic, as it appeared in reality, making it difficult to be sure exactly what type of garment was being illustrated. Despite such problems it has become evident, while using these sources, that there were various ways for wearing bag-tunics.



Fig. 8:7 Two women wearing what appears to be long bag-tunics (Middle Kingdom coffin; after Lacau 1904, I, pl. VI, no. 28116)

So far no clear representations of a full-length bag-tunic have been found from an Old Kingdom source, but they do begin to appear during the Middle Kingdom, and are very common by the New Kingdom.<sup>23</sup> One of the best examples of a Middle Kingdom depiction is the representation of

<sup>23</sup> It is possible that a group of women on a painting from the tomb of Iti, Gebelein, are wearing bag-tunics (Turin Museum, 14354). Unfortunately, the condition of the piece makes it impossible to be certain about this detail.

two women on the side of a coffin (Bouriant 1887:81; Lacau 1904, I, pl. VI; II, 95-96, no. 28116). Both of the women are shown wearing long, sleeveless tunics with small, rounded neck holes (fig. 8:7). The coffin was found at Mo'alla.



Fig. 8:8 Steward of Meryra wearing a long bag-tunic (tomb of Meryra, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1903, I, pl. X)

A good example from the New Kingdom can be found in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Meryra, Amarna. One of Meryra's stewards is shown wearing a large bag-tunic without sleeves (fig. 8:8; Davies 1903, I, pl. X). Another depiction of sleeveless bag-tunics can be seen in the Eighteenth



Fig. 8:9 Two girls fighting from the tomb of Menna. The "wings" of their tunics can be clearly seen (tomb of Menna, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; Davies 1936, I, pl. LI)

dynasty tomb of Menna, where two girls are fighting in a field (fig. 8:9; Davies, 1936, I, pl. LI). The "wings" of their tunics were clearly of no hindrance to their quarrel. A good representation of a bag-tunic with sleeves can be seen in the fourteenth century tomb of Mose (Riefstahl 1970:255, fig. 10). Two women are depicted dressed in tunics with voluminous underarm folds (fig. 8:10). The garments have long, folded or pleated sleeves.



Although no examples of a pleated bag-tunic have been found, several writers have suggested that pleating was one of the main forms of decorating bag-tunics (Freed 1982:171). There may be some confusion in this case, however, between folds in the cloth and deliberate pleats. Nevertheless, there are some depictions which would indicate that vertical pleating may have been applied to garments without sleeves, while the sleeves added to tunics were normally horizontally pleated (see fig. 8:10). An unusual form of pleated tunic may be depicted in the Middle Kingdom tomb of Amenemhet, Beni Hasan (Newberry 1893, I, pl. XIII). A herdsman appears to be wearing a horizontally pleated tunic which may represent a sleeveless bag-tunic (fig. 8:11). Nevertheless, caution should be exercised with this example, as another possibility is that he was wrapped in a striped blanket. Finally, it should be noted that, as yet, no examples of pleated bag-tunics have been found.



Fig. 8:10 Women working in a field. They are wearing sleeved bag-tunics (tomb of Mose, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Riefstahl 1970, 255, fig. 10)

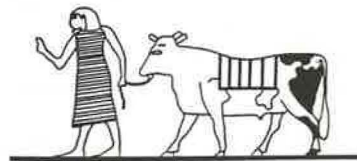


Fig. 8:11 Herdsman wearing a horizontally striped or pleated garment which may be a bag-tunic (tomb of Amenemhet, Beni Hasan, 11th Dynasty; after Newberry 1893, I, pl. XIII)

Although there are surviving examples and depictions of both sleeveless and sleeved bag-tunics, it is at times difficult to distinguish what type of garment is actually being illustrated. A suitable example of this problem can be seen in a tomb painting depicting Menna hunting (Davies 1936, II, pl.

LIV). In this case the artist has depicted the garment with one short 'sleeve', usually on the right-hand side, and a 'bat-wing' sleeve made from the material of the tunic (fig. 8:12).

In general bag-tunics are depicted with a small, round neck opening. In some representations the tunic was fastened at the neck, while in others it was left opened.



Fig. 8:12 Menna wearing a bag-tunic which appears to have one short sleeve and one bat-wing sleeve (tomb of Menna, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1936, II, pl. LIV)

Riefstahl suggested that the size of the bag-tunic indicates that they were originally worn with a sash of some kind in order to prevent them from sagging at the seams, especially around the armpits (Riefstahl 1970:253). Representations of tunics both with and without sashes can be found and in general it would appear that when a tunic was worn by itself it was not kept in place with a sash. On the other hand, when the garment was worn with, for example, a short kilt, then sashes were used.

Various paintings in the tomb of the New Kingdom vizier, Rekhmire, depict servants wearing either wrap-around dresses or bag-tunics (fig. 8:13; Davies 1943, pl. LXIV). The bag-tunic of one of the servants is of particular interest as she is wearing a garment which reaches to her ankles, as well as having 'sleeves' which come to the elbows rather than mid-forearm or wrists. More striking, however, is that she also has a band around her hips which went underneath the tunic. It would appear that it was not uncommon for serving girls to be depicted wearing such bands (see for



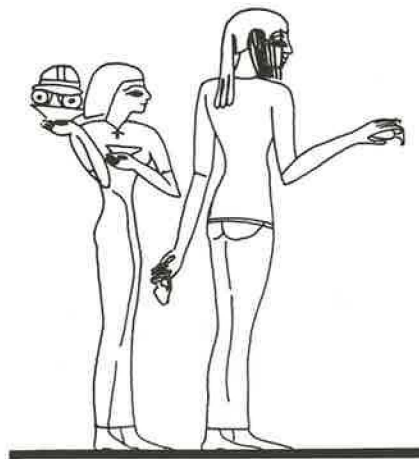


Fig. 8:13 Female servant wearing a long bag-tunic over a decorative hip band (tomb of Rekhmire, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1943, pl. LXIV)

example, the late fourteenth century B.C. tomb of Zeserkara'sonb; Mekhitarian 1954:67). It is also worth noting that her tunic was coloured a pinky red, the normal shade to indicate a semi-transparent material, while her companion was wearing a yellow garment. The colour of the latter tunic recalls the "shirt of yellow linen" found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun described previously.

It is evident from the finds and depictions described above that the bag-tunic was a unisex garment. But the question to be answered at this point is whether there were any minor differences. According to Riefstahl, the bag-tunic when worn by men was invariably shown in combination with a kilt or a wide kilt-like sash, usually pleated, which was wound tightly around the buttocks and doubled over in front (Riefstahl 1970:254). Exceptions, however, can be found. For example, one of the stewards in the tomb of Meryra, Amarna, is depicted wearing only a bag-tunic (see fig. 8:10). Nevertheless, such representations are rare. It is more common to find men wearing an elaborate costume over a bag-tunic. For example, Menna is shown wearing a bag-tunic, kilt, belt and broad collar (see fig. 8:12). In addition, the wearing of bag-tunics over other garments can also be found, especially (but not solely) with respect to men. One of the lute players, for example, depicted in the tomb of Thanuny, is clearly wearing a bag-tunic without sleeves, as can be seen at his left forearm (see fig. 5:7; Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 23a). Under the tunic he is wearing a short skirt fastened around the waist with a broad sash.

It would appear from the various representations that women wore bag-tunics while engaged in many forms of occupation, from working in the fields to serving at a banquet, while men tended to wear them 'for best' and had other working garments for everyday life. Riefstahl's assumption presented above, that men always combined bag-tunics with other garments, would support this idea.

Finally it is worth noting that the wearing of full-length bag-tunics was not restricted to Egyptians. A group of Nubian tribute bearers can be seen in the tomb of Huy (fig. 8:14; Davies 1926, pls. XXVII, XXIX). Some are wearing traditional Nubian garments, others a more formal Egyptian costume including bag-tunics worn with a sash-kilt. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether the artist was depicting an actual event, or whether he was dressing exotic figures in contemporary Egyptian clothing.



Fig. 8:14 Nubian servant wearing a bag-tunic and elaborate Nubian sash (tomb of Huy, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1926, pl. XXVII)

In conclusion, it would appear that the full-length bag-tunic was first worn during the Middle Kingdom, but that it was not widely used. By the New Kingdom, however, the wearing of such tunics had become widespread and they were worn by people working in the fields as well as by members of the court. Indeed, the wearing of bag-tunics at court seems to have replaced the use of cloaks in order to cover the upper torso, especially for men.

SHORT BAG-TUNICS

The short bag-tunic is basically a smaller version of the full-length bag-tunic; the width of the garment is the same, but it is much shorter. The construction of the tunic remains identical. The wearing of the short bag-tunic seems to have been a male prerogative, unlike the full-length bag-tunic, which was worn by both men and women.

*Surviving Examples of Short Bag-tunics*

One of the earliest examples of a short bag-tunic so far found in Egypt comes from a Middle Kingdom context, namely, the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of Meketre, Thebes.<sup>24</sup> According to the catalogue cards in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, where the garment was originally housed, it was "found in a chamber where all the embalming paraphernalia was placed. Had been in jars which were broken".<sup>25</sup> No further details about the provenance of this garment are available.

As with full-length bag-tunics the garment was made of a long piece of cloth folded in half, with a hole cut out for the neck. According to the W. C. Hayes the neck opening plus the bottom edges of the garment were rolled and whipped stitched (Hayes 1953 I:240).

In 1911-12 Petrie found a tunic at the site of Tarkhan which was dated to the Eighteenth Dynasty (see fig. 8:6).<sup>26</sup> There are numerous traces of couching all over the garment which would suggest that it had been heavily used (this point will be returned to below). It is now in a poor condition.

A second example of this garment type was wrapped around the body of Nakht the weaver, who lived during the Twentieth Dynasty (ROM 910.4.35.2). It was found with the full-length bag-tunic described previously.

Finally, a third example is now in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (E. 2486; pl. 42). Unfortunately, its provenance is not known.

*Construction of a Short Bag-tunic*

The smallest of the tunics so-far recorded is the example from the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of Meketre, Thebes (AMNH 95/2436), which is only 70 cm long and 78 cm wide. The ROM tunic is slightly larger being 91 cm in length and 110 cm wide, as opposed to the length of the full-length bag-

<sup>24</sup> ex. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 20.3.188; now American Museum of Natural History, New York, 95/2436. Hayes 1953, I, 240; Hall 1981a:30.

<sup>25</sup> My thanks to Dept. of Egyptian Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, for allowing me to use the unpublished information provided on the cards.

<sup>26</sup> UC 28616Ci. Unpublished tomb. Hall 1981a:30-32.

tunic of between 120-150 cm and a width of about 80-110 cm (see Tables 2 and 3). The example now in Brussels has a length of 114 cm and a width of 93 cm. Similarly, the Tarkhan example is 92 cm long and approximately 102 cm wide. The neck openings of all of these garments are present and in each case a rolled and whipped hem has been used to neaten the edge. A slight variation of the neck opening is to be seen on the Tarkhan example which has a vertical slit rather than a round hole for the neck. Although only part of the ROM tunic is still present, it is clear that it had a rolled and whipped hem at the bottom of the garment. The Petrie Museum example, on the other hand, includes a fringe along the lower edge. It has a 9.0 cm fringe at the bottom of the garment made from twisted warp threads. The Brussels example is somewhat more unusual in using the selvages as the lower edge of the item. There are several other details about this tunic which are also uncommon (fig. 8:15). Firstly, warp tassels were used along the side edges as a form of decoration. These were cut away around the armpits. Secondly, the garment was shortened by about 12 cm with a tuck placed just below the armpits. Finally, self-bands were woven into the garment to strengthen the neck region. These bands indicate that the cloth was purposely woven as a tunic, because the placing of these features is quite deliberate. It is worth noting that both the tuck and self-bands or multi-entries around the neck region are typical features of much later Coptic tunics, especially those made out of wool. This raises the question whether the Brussels tunic is of a later date than originally thought, or whether it represents the link between the Pharaonic bag-tunic and the Coptic tunic. Of the two, the latter would seem to be the more likely.

Table 4. Measurements of short bag-tunics in various collections, listed in chronological order (in centimetres; all dates are approximate)

Tunic	Provenance	Date	Length	Width
Meketre AMNH 95/2436	Thebes	11th Dyn.	70.0	78.0
UC 28616Ci+	Tarkhan	18th Dyn.	92.0	102.0
Nakht ROM 910.4.35b+	unknown	20th Dyn.	91.0	111.0
Brussels+ E.2486	unknown	unknown	93.0	114.0



*Depictions of Short Bag-tunics*

One of the earliest representations of a short bag-tunic can be seen in the Middle Kingdom tombs at Beni Hasan (Newberry 1894: II, pl. XIII). In the tomb of Khety, for example, groups of men are shown wearing sleeveless tops with either rounded or slightly V-shaped necklines (fig. 8:16). The garments reach to either waist or thigh length. The occupation of the men varies, some are barbers, others are cleaning the laundry, a third group appears to be pulling in a net. As in the case of the full-length version of the bag-tunic, representations of short bag-tunics are more common in the

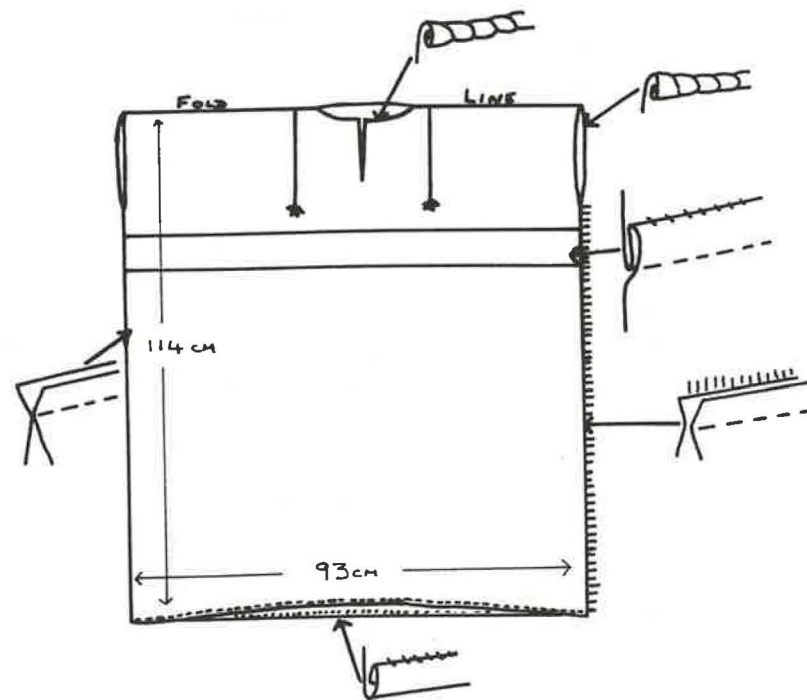


Fig. 8:15 Structure of the short bag-tunic now in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (Brussels E.2486)

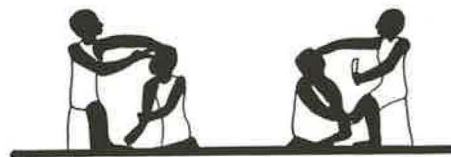


Fig. 8:16 Group of men wearing what appears to be short bag-tunics (tomb of Khety, Beni Hasan, 12th Dynasty; after Newberry 1894, II, pl. XIII)

New Kingdom than the Middle Kingdom. In this case, however, they are associated with men rather than both men and women. Several examples of the use of a short bag-tunic can be seen in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Thanuny (Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 25c). In one example a man is leading a bull in an offering scene (fig. 8:17). He is wearing a short bag-tunic with tie at the neck line. Over the tunic he is wearing an under and top kilt. A similarly dressed man can be seen with recruits for the army. In this case however, the bat-wing effect of his tunic is clearly represented (fig. 8:18; *idem*, Taf. 35d). Over his tunic he is wearing an under-skirt which has been pulled over the top to create a scalloped edge effect.



Fig. 8:17 Servant wearing a short bag-tunic with short kilt and sash (tomb of Thanuny, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 25c)

In conclusion, the short bag-tunic, just like the full-length version of this type of garment, seems to have become popular during the New Kingdom, with some isolated examples originating from the Middle Kingdom. Since we have already discussed several types of garment which were widely worn during the Old Kingdom, and which apparently served the same function as the bag-tunics (for instance the archaic wrap-arounds and various types of dresses), the question may be asked whether at some time during the almost three thousand years of Pharaonic history, the bag-tunic replaced several wrap-around garments. As discussed in the two preceding chapters, the archaic tunic and the V-necked dress seem to have disappeared altogether by the New Kingdom. Whether or not the two developments are connected remains to be seen, and I will come back to this point in the final chapter.

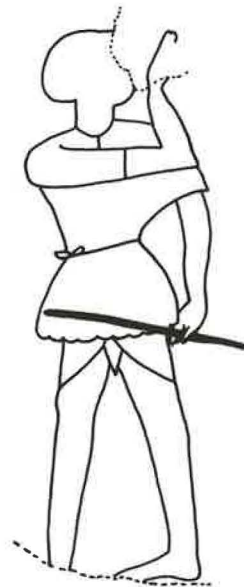


Fig. 8:18 Soldier wearing a short bag-tunic with an apron, short kilt with scalloped edge (tomb of Thanuny, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Brack and Brack 1977, Taf. 35d)

## CHAPTER NINE

### SHAWLS AND CLOAKS

The garments described in this chapter have certain features in common, namely, they were usually worn over other items of clothing, for protective or decorative reasons. They were normally made from oblong, square or rectangular pieces of cloth. The two basic types of garments to be described are: (a) shawls and (b) cloaks. It should be stressed, however, that there may be some overlap between the uses of these garments.

#### SHAWLS

The term shawl is used to describe an outer garment worn by both men and women. It normally consisted of an oblong, square or rectangle of cloth which only covered the upper part of the body.

#### *Surviving Examples of Shawls*

Various excavation reports refer to "shawls" found in a number of tombs. Unfortunately, however, further details are usually non-existent, or at best vague. As discussed in the chapter on dress, G. Brunton found a V-necked dress in Burial no. 3, Gebelein. In addition to the dress there were two items which he described as shawls: "a rough garment and a shawl ... The other shawl found on the body was about the same size as the first 0m 140 [sic] x 0m 90 with selvedge and fringe" (Brunton 1940:522, 527; present location unknown). No further details were given. The measurements are somewhat difficult to understand; did he mean that the object was 1.40 m in size or 14.0 cm? This makes a considerable difference when considering whether the garment is actually a shawl or a sash of some kind. I suspect he meant 1.40 metres. Consequently these garments were probably shawls, but without illustrations or further evidence this identification has to remain hypothetical.

As noted in other chapters, there are tantalizing glimpses and hints of possible items of clothing placed within the tomb of Tut'ankhamun. A list is given below of all the objects labelled as "shawls, capes and cloaks" found inside the tomb, based on Carter's notes now in the Griffith Institute, Oxford. The following list does not include the sheets or large pieces of



linen which should perhaps also have been included, but are omitted because the details are simply too vague.

21p	garment or shawl decorated with daisies in gold and faience
21q	similar garment or shawl
21r	similar garment or shawl
21t	leopard-skin cloak
44q	leopard-skin robe
46ff	remains of leopard-skin robe
50d	shawl
50f1	shawl fringed at either end
50f2	similar shawl, one end fringed
50f3	another shawl
50f4	remains of at least two more shawls
50h	shawl
50k	remains of a shirt or shawl
50n	shawl
50o-q	three shawls
101u	robe or shawl
101v	two shawls
269	shawl?
269c3	linen shawl

As can be seen from the above list, the details at present are brief, but it is hoped that future research into the cloth placed within the tomb will shed light on this matter.

It has been possible to examine in greater detail one of the objects from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun which may be a shawl. The object is made out of extremely fine linen and is about 75 cm square. It has the remains of both selvedges, plus one starting edge. The other edge has been neatened with a rolled and whipped seam (pl. 42; Landi 1987:9-10). It was originally wrapped around the neck of a statue of Anubis found in the entrance to the "Treasury". The cloth was one of the various pieces of material which Carter simply described as "jackal-like dog Anubis, covered with linen".<sup>1</sup>

Of some interest are the remains of crease marks in the two, diagonally opposite corners. The position of these marks would suggest that the garment had been knotted together, but whether it was only knotted around the neck of the statue, or whether these are marks of actual use, remains debatable.

<sup>1</sup> Carter 1933:34, pl. II. The other items of "linen" found with the shawl include a "scarf" and a bag-tunic (Landi 1987).

### Depictions of Shawls

Men or women are occasionally depicted wearing a short shawl. One of the earliest representations of this type of garment can be found in the Middle Kingdom tomb of the nomarch Dhehuti-hetep, el-Bersheh (fig. 9:1; Newberry 1894, I, pls. XI-XIII, XIX-XX). He is wearing a rectangle of cloth which appears to have been folded or pleated. Two corners are fastened together in some manner just below the sternum. Dhehuti-hetep is shown in five different scenes wearing this type of garment and apart from a slight variation in the length of the object it would appear that the artist was depicting the same item.

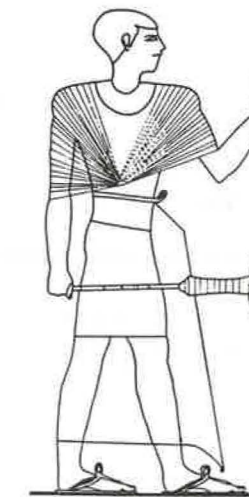


Fig. 9:1 The nomarch Dhehuti-hetep wearing a pleated shawl draped over both shoulders (tomb of Dhehuti-hetep, el-Bersheh, Middle Kingdom; after Newberry 1894, I, pl. XII)

A representation of a woman wearing a shawl similar to that of Dhehuti-hetep's can be seen on the Eleventh Dynasty sarcophagus of Kawit from Deir el-Bahri, Thebes (JdE 47397; fig. 9:2; Saleh and Sourouzian, 1986, no. 68). She is wearing a wrap-around dress with ornate shoulder straps and a short, pleated or folded shawl draped over her shoulders in such a way that only two points show at front.<sup>2</sup> The cloth at the back hangs to waist height. The material used for the shawl appears to be pleated. Jewellery has been placed over her garments.

<sup>2</sup> A similar shawl, but unpleated can be seen on the contemporary coffin of Akhait, Saleh and Sourouzian 1986, no. 69.

There are few examples of short shawls worn by Egyptians, which may indicate that this garment was not a typical, everyday Egyptian garment. Instead, it seems to have been characteristic for people from Asia, as shown in various reliefs. One of the clearest depictions of a so-called 'Asiatic' shawl can be seen in a relief from the Amarna period (ca. 1350 B.C.) found



Fig. 9:2 Lady wearing a shawl worn in a similar manner to that depicted in figure 9:1 (sarcophagus of Kawit, 11th Dynasty, JE 47397; after Saleh and Sourouzian 1986: no. 68)

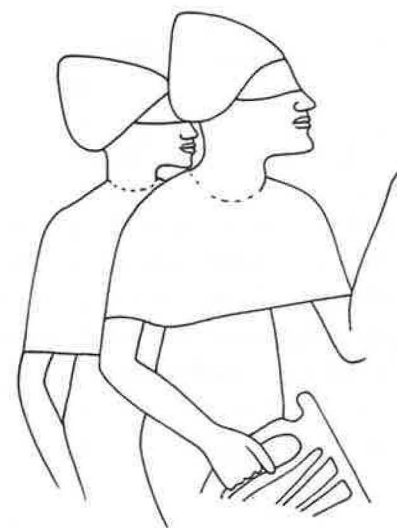


Fig. 9:3 Group of musicians wearing 'Asiatic' shawls (relief from Hermopolis, 18th Dynasty; after Cooney 1965:70-71, no. 45)

at Hermopolis (Cooney 1965:70-71, no. 45). It depicts a group of musicians wearing conical caps, short cape-like shawls and possibly bag-tunics (fig. 9:3).

Their clothing is not consistent with normal Egyptian wear, and the suggestion has been made by, among others, Cooney that the men derived from Asia (*idem*). The shawls were thrown over both shoulders and fastened at the front. In each case the shawl is shown reaching breast height. Similar costumes were also worn by a group of Syrian (?) musicians in the contemporary Aten chapel at Karnak (Chevrier 1938, pl. CX; Smith 1958:181, pl. 124b). It would appear that this type of garment was part of a musician's attire. It would therefore also seem to represent an item of occupational clothing rather than everyday wear.

#### LONG CLOAKS

A cloak can be defined as a large oblong, square or rectangular piece of cloth which was generally worn over other garments as a source of warmth or protection against the elements. The wearing of a cloak for warmth also raises the question whether these garments were actually cloaks or whether they can be classed as blankets. However, trying to define the difference between a blanket and a long cloak has proved to be extremely difficult, if not impossible, as it is likely that they were frequently one and the same object. It is common, for example, in present-day Afghanistan for men to use a large blanket as a cloak when it is cold during the day (W. Vogelsang, pers. comm.). The question of blankets also raises points as to whether such Pharaonic objects were always made of flax or wool. So far no large fragments of woollen cloth which can be satisfactorily described as a blanket have been found at a Pharaonic site in Egypt, although small quantities of wool, including one fragment which may be the selvedge from a blanket, have been found at the Workmen's Village, Amarna (Vogelsang-Eastwood, in press). As a result this point cannot be taken any further at present.

Numerous different ways of wearing long cloaks are depicted in Egyptian reliefs or on statues. The manner in which the garment was worn appears to be related to the task at hand. For example, a seated person who is wearing a cloak, perhaps for warmth, is usually shown with the garment tossed around the shoulders and then overlapping at the front. On the other hand, a man on a chariot is shown with his cloak open allowing his arms to be free, as well as possibly indicating the concept of movement (see below).

The types of cloak represented in Pharaonic art can be divided into two basic forms, namely (a) wrap-around and (b) knotted versions. By a knotted



cloak I refer to a garment knotted or fastened at the shoulder in order to hold it in place.

(a) *Wrap-around Cloaks*

The wrap-around would appear to have been the most common of the two types of cloak. Needless to say, there are numerous variations in how such a cloak could be worn, for example it was sometimes worn over both shoulders, or over one shoulder and under the opposite armpit.



Fig. 9:4 Protodynastic figure of a woman wearing a long cloak (Ashmolean Museum E. 326, Hierakonpolis; after Quibell 1900, I, pl. IX)

One of the simplest and oldest methods of wearing a wrap-around cloak can be seen in a Protodynastic figure of a female found at Hierakonpolis (fig. 9:4).<sup>3</sup> The standing figure is shown wearing the cloak wrapped around her with the left side over the right. A similar method of wearing a cloak, but right over left, can be seen on the Fourth Dynasty statue of Nofret (Cairo, CCG 4; Smith 1946, pl. 6:c). She is wearing a wrap-around dress with two straps, and with a long cloak on top (fig. 9:5). It has simply been placed over both shoulders, with two ends of the cloak overlapping in front. This manner of wearing a cloak is frequently shown on Old and Middle Kingdom statues, and both men and women are represented with such garments.

<sup>3</sup> Ashmolean Museum E.326. Quibell 1900, I, pl. IX. Another ivory figurine of a woman from the same site is wrapped in a blanket which has a zig-zag pattern on the front and back (*idem*).

The wrapping of a cloak over one shoulder can be seen more commonly in Middle and New Kingdom tombs. In the Middle Kingdom tomb of Ukhhotep, Meir, for example, the tomb owner is shown wearing a long, striped or pleated cloak which was coloured green (fig. 9:6; Blackman 1953, VI, pl. XVIII). It has been draped over the left shoulder and covers the arm up to the elbow. If the garment was worn in the way described above, it would have been easy simply to slip off some of the material from the shoulder and allow it to fall over the left arm, thus creating the depicted effect. One detail which is not clear from the line drawing given in A. M. Blackman's publication of the tomb, is whether the original artist in fact depicted what appears to be seven layers of material of which one appears to be at the front and six at the back. Nevertheless, according to Blackman Ukhhotep was:

... dressed in what may be described as a long cloak covered with stippled green bars upon a white background. In front, and at the bottom the hem is indicated by red, white and green lines. Beneath the garment protrudes the skirt of another garment painted grey. (Blackman 1953, VI, 18)

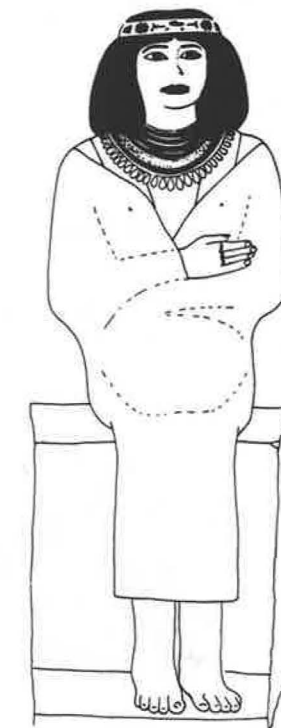


Fig. 9:5 Figure of Nofret wearing a long cloak (statue of Nofret, 4th Dynasty; after Smith 1946, pl. 6:c)

Thus the cloak would appear to have had a decorative border. If the colours are accurate, it would suggest that Ukh-hotep was wearing a woollen cloak or blanket of some kind, rather than a linen version. The reason for this suggestion lies in the fact that flax does not easily take a dye and the colour range used in Egypt during the Pharaonic period tends to be relatively narrow (Germer, in press). On the other hand, wool dyes easily and a wide variety of colours can be obtained. The colour red could have been produced from an ochreous earth or perhaps the dye plant madder (*Rubia* species), while the colour green could have been made from woad (*Isatis* species) together with a yellow dye of some kind, perhaps safflower (*Carthamus* species). These dye plants were known and used in the Levant from the Middle Kingdom onwards (*idem*).



Fig. 9:6 Ukh-hotep wearing a cloak draped over one shoulder (tomb of Ukh-hotep, Meir, Middle Kingdom; Blackman 1953, VI, pl. XVIII)

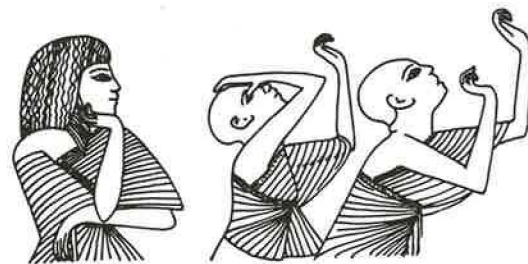


Fig. 9:7 Group of men wearing cloaks draped around part of the body with the excess thrown over the left shoulder (tomb of Horemheb, Thebes, New Kingdom; Brack and Brack 1980, Taf. 63c)

A similar manner of wearing a cloak can be seen in the New Kingdom tomb of Horemheb, Thebes (Brack and Brack 1980, Taf. 63c). In the tomb there is also a group of men who all wear short skirts underneath long bag-tunics (fig. 9:7). Over the top of these garments has been draped a cloak which is wrapped around part of the body with the excess thrown over the left shoulder.

Another version of wrapping a cloak, which is slightly different to the method described above, can be seen on a New Kingdom ostrakon, perhaps an artist's trial piece, which was found at Thebes (fig. 9:8; Winlock 1928:24). The man, Pekhorenkhonsu, the doorkeeper of the temple of Amun, is depicted in profile and his cloak is shown as having been wrapped several times around the body with the excess simply allowed to fall down the back without being tucked in. This method of wearing a cloak is also reminiscent of an Eighteenth Dynasty tile now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. It depicts a single figure driving a chariot (fig. 9:9; MMA 1917.7.194.2297; Peck and Ross 1978, no. 91). The man is wearing an unpleated cloak which is thrown over his left shoulder and allowed to hang down his back.

Finally, a word should be said about an elaborate method of wrapping a cloak which can be seen in the tomb of the nomarch Dhehuti-hetep (fig. 9:10; Newberry 1894, I, pl. VII).



Fig. 9:8 Pekhorenkhonsu wearing a cloak wrapped several times around his body with the fringed end draped over his shoulder (after Winlock 1928:24, fig. 28)

He is depicted wearing a pleated cloak wrapped around both of his arms. How the cloak was actually wrapped is not clear. It appears to have been placed over the right shoulder, wrapped once or possibly twice around the



body and then the remaining material was taken over the left shoulder and tucked in at the top. L. Pedrini suggested that it was wrapped in a manner similar to that worn by women in Lagash (Pedrini 1985:64-65, fig. 2):

The way the cloak is shaped is as follows: the middle point of one of the longer sides of the piece is set against the chest, each end is passed under the arm and crossed on the back. The two upper corners are brought forward over the shoulders onto the chest; one corner is tucked under the top edge of the cloak, with the short side hanging loose above the arm. The other upper corner is gathered together, passed underneath the forearm and tucked inside the top edge of the cloak, thus forming a pocket that supports the arm. (Pedrini 1985:64)

As noted by Pedrini, this would appear to be the only representation of this type of cloak. It would suggest that this manner of draping may not have been of Egyptian origin. However, it should be noted that Pedrini based these observations on a reconstruction of the garment made by M. Houston. Other methods of 'finishing' the garment are possible, which would give different effects. Thus, until either more complete depictions are found, or actual garments are brought to light and their crease marks can be examined in detail, the question how exactly the cloak worn by Dhehuti-hetep was draped must remain unanswered.

#### (b) Knotted Cloaks

The wearing of knotted cloaks would not appear to have been as common as that of wrap-around forms. Like the latter, they were worn by both men and women. Unlike the wrap-around examples, however, there is a representation of this form of cloak which gives an indication about how it may have been constructed.

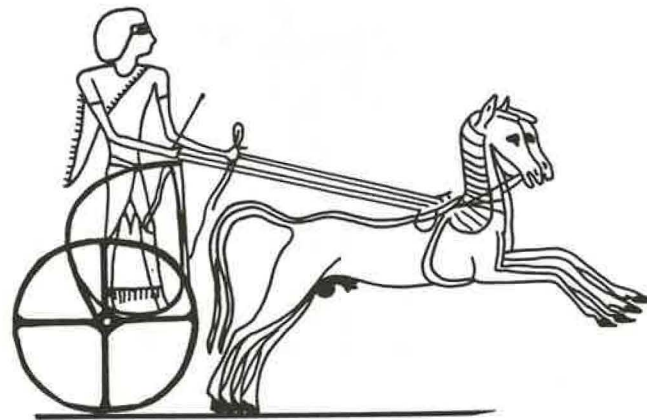


Fig. 9:9 Charioteer wearing an unpleated cloak thrown over his left shoulder (18th Dynasty tile, MMA 1917.17.194.2297; after Peck and Ross 1978, no. 91)

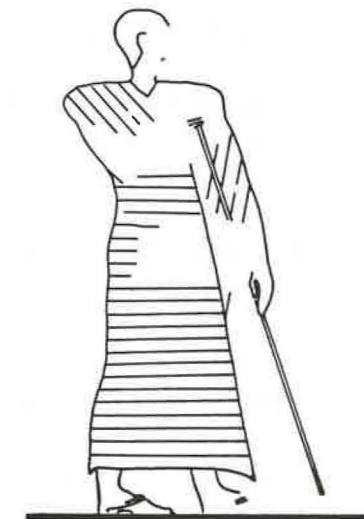


Fig. 9:10 Dhehuti-hetep wearing a striped or pleated cloak (tomb of Dhehuti-hetep, el-Bersheh, Middle Kingdom; after Newberry 1894, I, pl. VII)

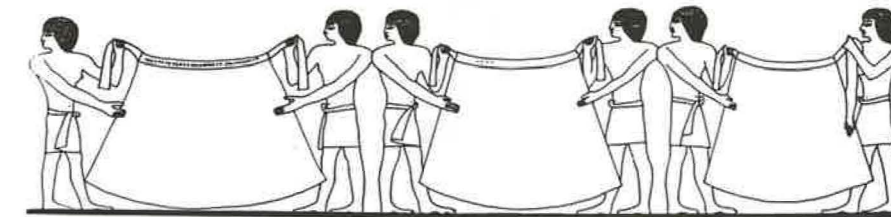


Fig. 9:11 Mantles of various types as depicted in the mastaba of Kha'afkhufu, Giza (5th Dynasty; after Simpson 1978, fig. 30)

In the Old Kingdom mastaba of Kha'afkhufu I, Giza, a line of six men are holding up three cloaks (fig. 9:11; Simpson 1978, fig. 30). Above each cloak there is an hieroglyphic inscription which reads, respectively: "mantle of Upper Egyptian leopard skin"; "mantle" and "knee mantle".<sup>4</sup> The size of these cloaks varies slightly. The first is the largest both in terms of width and length. The third example is the smallest. This may be an artistic

<sup>4</sup> Simpson 1978:14, fig. 30. Similar leopard skin cloaks held by women are depicted in a relief from the mastaba of Wehemka, now in the Hildesheim Museum, Germany (Staehelin, 1966, Taf. VII, Abb. 12).



device, or it shows that various sizes of cloaks were made for different functions.

The mantles depicted in the mastaba of Kha'afkhufu seem to have been made from a large piece of skin or cloth roughly rectangular in shape. A second narrow length of cloth was probably sewn across the top of the main body of the cloak. It would have been long enough to have ends free at either side. Such a method of construction is similar to that used for a headcovering found just outside of the tomb of Tut'ankhamun which will be discussed in the next chapter.

The wearing of this type of cloak, made of either leopard skin or cloth, can be seen in a number of tombs which date from the Archaic period onwards. For example, in the Fourth Dynasty mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III, a woman is shown wearing a leopard skin cloak which was tied with an elaborate knot on her right shoulder (fig. 9:12; Dunham and Simpson 1974, fig. 7).



Fig. 9:12 Woman wearing a leopard skin cloak tied at one shoulder with an elaborate knot (mastaba of Queen Mersyankh III, Giza, 4th Dynasty; after Dunham and Simpson 1974, fig. 7)

In the Old Kingdom tomb of Ptahhetep, Saqqara, there are two representations of a hunter wearing what appears in the published line drawing to be a pleated cloak (fig. 9:13; Davies 1900, I, pl. XVIII). In one representation he is standing, while in the other he is shown kneeling. It is evident from these depictions that the garment in question comes to knee height and was wrapped once around the body. The cloak has been fastened on the left shoulder with an elaborate knot. A detail which is not clear from the line

drawings is the fact that the so-called pleats are actually coloured stripes. The top and bottom bands are in white, flanked on one side by a narrow green band with orange dots. In between there are six repeating rows of blue, red and orange bands respectively, separated by narrow white bands. Although it is now impossible to identify the material from which the cloak was made, it may be suggested that wool had been used, for the same reasons as given previously with respect to the cloak or blanket worn by Ukhhotep.

There were various ways in which knotted cloaks were worn during the New Kingdom. For example, the cloak worn by a herdsman in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Menna has simply been wrapped once around the body and fastened on the right shoulder (fig. 9:14). There are traces of white around the waist, which would suggest that the cloak was worn over a loincloth or kilt.

A group of priests in the New Kingdom tomb of Nakhtamun are depicted wearing cloaks which are knotted at the shoulder, while the ends of the straps are allowed to hang free (fig. 9:15; Davies 1948, pl. XXVI). An interesting detail about these cloaks is that various sizes are depicted. This point brings to mind the different sizes of mantles shown in the mastaba of Kha'afkhufu described previously.



Fig. 9:13 Hunter wearing a knotted cloak fastened at one shoulder (mastaba of Ptahhetep and Akhetetep, Saqqara, 5th Dynasty; after Davies 1900, I, pl. XVII)

In conclusion, the wearing of short shawls as an outer garment would appear to be an atypical Egyptian form, if the extant representations can be trusted. On the other hand it would seem to be such a useful garment it seems hard to believe that it was not more common. This point, however, will have to remain open until more textiles from excavations are made available for examination.



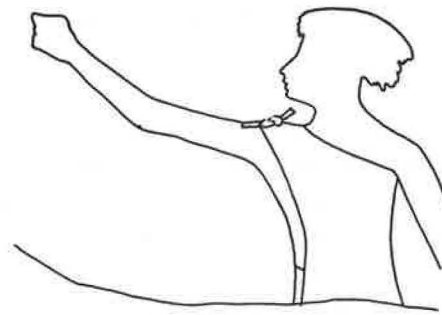


Fig. 9:14 Herdsman wearing a cloak knotted at one shoulder (tomb of Menna, Thebes, New Kingdom; after Mekhitarian, 1954, p. 113)

On the other hand, there is considerable evidence to show that the wearing of long cloaks was common to both men and women and that it had a long history in Egypt proper. As with many other types of garments described in this study, long cloaks can be divided into two basic forms, wrap-around and knotted. At present, there would appear to be no indication that there was a social difference in the wearing of these two types. In fact the difference may be related to the task in hand. Thus someone sitting would wear a wrap-around cloak for warmth, while the knotted cloak of the hunter or chariot driver could be seen as a garment worn for protection with a minimum of hindrance to movement.



Fig. 9:15 Group of priests wearing fringed cloaks knotted at the shoulder, with the ends of the ties hanging free (tomb of Nakhtamun, Thebes, New Kingdom; after Davies 1948, pl. XXVI)

## CHAPTER TEN

### HEADGEAR

The term headgear has been deliberately chosen to avoid confusion with other forms of head covering such as crowns and diadems, which had special, symbolic uses and which were not worn or seen on a day-to-day basis in Egypt. The two different forms of headgear to be discussed in this chapter are: (A) Caps and (B) Kerchiefs.

#### (A) CAPS

A cap is defined as a small, shaped piece of headgear without a brim. Generally, a cap covers much of the head, while a very similar type of headgear, namely a skull cap, covers only a small part, usually the top back region.

#### *Surviving Examples of Caps*

Few items which can be identified as caps appear to have been found. H. Carter recorded the presence of several objects in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun which were labelled as being "caps" of various kinds (for example, Murray and Nuttall 1963: 21s, 21w, 256 4p bis and 256 4t). But the condition of these pieces makes it uncertain whether they come under the definition of a cap or not. A second skull cap with beadwork was found by Carter in a box "especially made for the king's headwear" (Carter 1933, III, 119, pl. XXXVII). Unfortunately the cloth was badly decayed although it was possible to record the beadwork patterning. In addition, it is feasible that there were other caps amongst the objects placed within the tomb, which were not recognized as such.

Carter also published some intriguing details about a "skull cap" (256 4t) found on the king's head:



Beneath that *Khat*<sup>1</sup> head-dress were further layers of bandaging that covered a skull-cap of fine linen fabric, fitting tightly over the shaven head of the king, and embroidered with an elaborate device of uraei in minute gold and faience beads. The cap was kept in place by a gold temple-band ... Each uraeus of the device bears in its centre the *Aten* cartouche of the Sun. The fabric of the cap was unfortunately much carbonized and decayed, but the bead-work had suffered far less, the device being practically perfect, since it adhered to the head of the king. (Carter 1927:II,113)

Again, however, the poor condition of the item has made it impossible to be certain about the construction of the skull-cap itself.

### *Depictions of Caps*

One of the problems when looking for evidence of caps is that when looking at line drawings of Egyptian tomb reliefs it can be difficult to decide whether someone is wearing a cap or a wig or indeed whether it is their natural hair. In some examples the cap is closely fitted to the skull and it is only because there are a few hairs sticking out from the front that it becomes apparent that the person is wearing a cap. In the New Kingdom tomb of Menna, for example, there are a group of men working in a field. At least two of the men are wearing tightly fitting caps (fig. 10:1; Davies 1936, I, pl. LI).

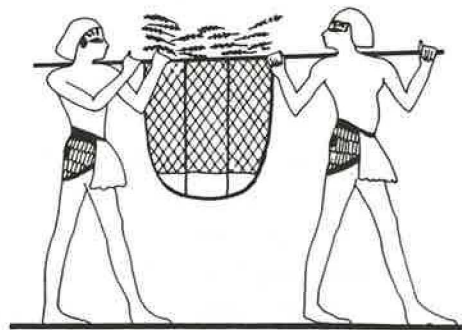


Fig. 10:1 Two men wearing tightly fitting caps (tomb of Menna, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; after Davies 1936, I, pl. LI)

A clearer depiction of a man wearing a cap can be seen on a relief from Hermopolis (see fig. 9:3; Schimmel collection; Cooney 1965:70-72, no. 45).

<sup>1</sup> The *Khat* headdress is a royal insignia and as such will not be discussed in this study. According to Carter the *khat* headdress found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun was in a bad condition and only part of the top and the 'pigtail' survived (Carter 1927, II, 112).

The relief shows a group of musicians, some of whom carry lutes. They all wear short shawls, flounced skirts and large, conical caps. As discussed previously in connection with the shawls worn by the musicians, Cooney suggested that the costume of this group is typical for foreign musicians (Cooney 1965:72). He illustrated this point by referring to several reliefs in the Aten temple at Karnak, and depictions of musicians in the suite of Queen Tiye (tomb of Huy, Amarna).

### *Discussion*

One of the frustrating details about the caps worn by the Egyptians on a daily basis is how few examples seem to have survived. Although this situation may simply be due to the fact that suitable items have not yet been recognized as such. The poor survival of the skull cap from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun mentioned previously, has caused several problems as it means it is difficult at present to investigate how such caps were actually made. As a result no information can be given as to whether this particular form of garment was commonly worn or whether it should be seen as a special item due either to Tut'ankhamun's royal status or its use for funerary purposes.

Based on various representations it would appear that the wearing of caps was widespread, but in the case of workmen they tend to be shown in conditions where there was considerable dust and dirt, for example in a field being harvested. On the other hand the wearing of skull caps by members of the court may be due to the need to protect their wigs or shaven heads.

There are only a few depictions of men wearing large and pointed caps, and in most cases these are either apparently foreigners or the caps form part of the garb of professional musicians. This would suggest that this type of cap may not have been a common item.

### (B) KERCHIEFS

The term kerchief is used to indicate a piece of cloth which covered part or all of the head. In general they are made out of a single piece of cloth which was neatened around the edges, but not sewn into a specific shape.

### *Surviving Examples of Kerchiefs*

In 1909 T. M. Davies presented the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, with three kerchiefs which had been found, together with a number



of other objects, just outside a tomb in the Valley of the Kings (pl. 43, see also pl. 2; Winlock 1916, esp. p. 239; *idem* 1941:217-210, pls. IIA, VIIF). The tomb was eventually identified as that of Tut'ankhamun and it was concluded that the objects formed part of the material used during the embalming process (Winlock 1941). Of the three kerchiefs, two were white, while the third was dyed blue and made from a double thickness of cloth. All three were apparently well worn and darned in places. Winlock speculated that they had been worn over a wig of some kind for protection (Winlock 1941:10). At least twelve comparable examples of this type of cloth were found inside Tut'ankhamun's tomb. They were originally described by Carter as being apron-shaped loincloths (Murray and Nuttall 1963, nos. 46i,j,k,vv, 101 (aa)).

#### Construction

The following description of some of Tut'ankhamun's kerchiefs is taken from H. E. Winlock's account of the materials used for embalming the king:

The front of each kerchief is a straight edge and the back rounded; a tape some 92 centimeters long and about 1.5 centimeters wide, with free ends about 25 centimeters long, is sewed across the forehead 12 centimeters from the two corners. The lengths from the middle of the forehead to the middle of the semicircle back are 40, 51 and 52.5 centimeters, and the widths in front are 53, 66, and 68.5 centimeters - the blue kerchief being the smallest. All three kerchiefs are made of very light and fine linen; in two cases the threads number thirty by sixty to the square centimeter, and in the third there are as many as thirty-five by seventy-five. (fig. 10:2; Winlock 1941:10)

One of the kerchiefs found inside the tomb is now on display in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (see pl. 2; no number available). It was made from two layers of fine, undyed linen which had been shaped. It roughly forms a square, the top of which is straight, with the sides gradually sloping inwards. Two shallow semi-circles were cut out at the bottom. The outer edges were neatened with a rolled and whipped stitch hem. A tie made from a separate piece of cloth folded in half, was sewn to the top middle of the garment.<sup>2</sup>

It is likely that the Tut'ankhamun kerchiefs were worn by placing the top of the cloth over the forehead, with the ties going round to the back of the nape where they were fastened in a manner similar to that depicted in Plate 44. The excess material was either left loose or fastened at the back.

<sup>2</sup> Winlock also suggested that a square version of this type of kerchief could have been the origin of a form of head covering called *khat* (Winlock 1916:239). So far no such examples appear to have been found.

#### Depictions of Kerchiefs

One of the simplest methods of wearing a kerchief can be seen on an Old Kingdom model of a woman grinding grain (fig. 10:3; CCG 110; Mastaba D.20, Saqqara; Borchardt 1911, I, 86, pl. 24). She is wearing a short length of

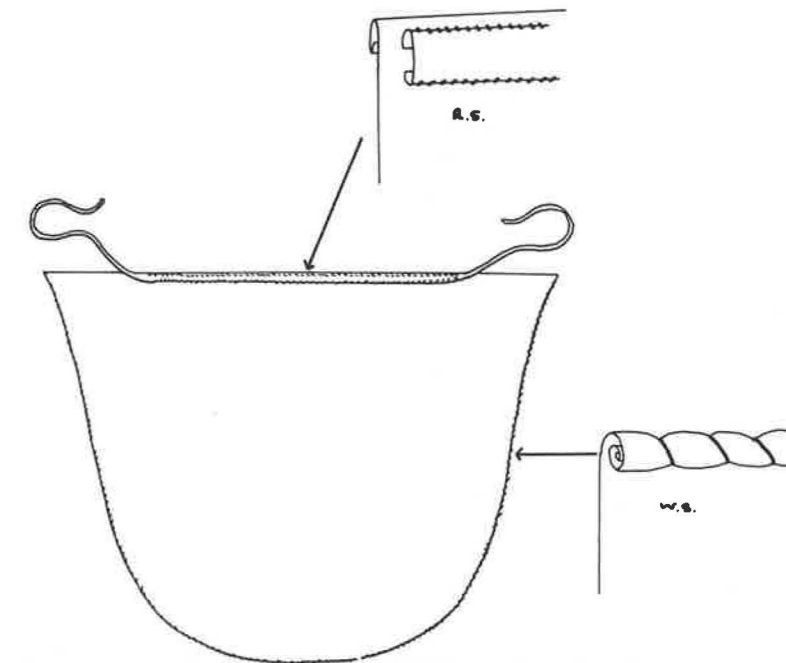


Fig. 10:2 Construction of a kerchief found in the New Kingdom tomb of Tut'ankhamun, Thebes

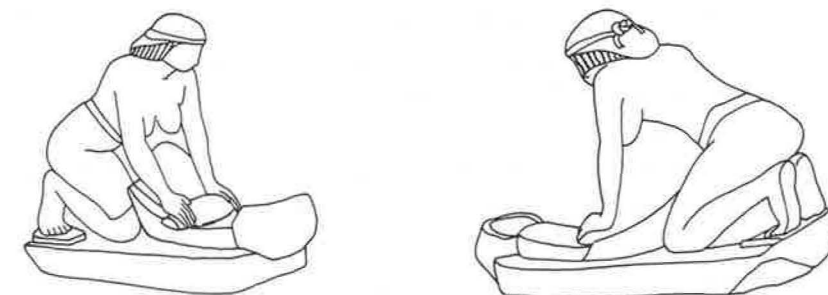


Fig. 10:3 Model of a servant girl wearing a short kerchief over her hair. The kerchief is kept in place with a narrow length of cloth tied at the back of her head (CCG 110; Vth Dynasty Mastaba D.20, Saqqara; after Hornemann 1966, no. 1032)

cloth over her hair. The kerchief was kept in place with a narrow band of cloth tied at the back of the head. A similar but somewhat longer kerchief



to the above example can be seen on a model of a servant girl carrying a basket on her head now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen (AE IN 670). The model dates from the Middle Kingdom. Her hair is covered with a simple piece of white cloth placed over her head and kept in place with a red headband (fig. 10:4).



Fig. 10:4 Model of a servant girl wearing a simple kerchief over her hair tied in place with a headband (Old Kingdom; Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen AE IN 679)

The use of a kerchief similar to those of Tut'ankhamun can be seen on the New Kingdom statue of Ahmose I (*ca.* 1550-1525 B.C.; fig. 10:5; Munich AS 501; Eggebrecht 1987:150, no. 67). He is wearing a cloak over both shoulders which goes down to his ankles. His head is covered by a simple piece of cloth which goes behind the ears with the excess material draped behind. This particular example of a kerchief is plain, but in another statue of Ahmose he is wearing a pleated kerchief (Brooklyn Museum, 61.196; Eggebrecht 1987:160).

A second type of kerchief is characterized by its smallness and tight fit. There are relatively few illustrations of this type of kerchief from the Old and Middle Kingdom. Nevertheless, a good example of its use can be seen in a harvesting and threshing scene in the Fifth Dynasty mastaba of Kahif, Giza (Junker 1943: Taf. VI, XIVb). Two women are tossing grain into the air (fig. 10:6). Around their heads they are wearing tightly fitting caps or lengths of cloth knotted at the back of the head.



Fig. 10:5 Statue of Ahmose I wearing a kerchief similar to those found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (*ca.* 1550-1525 B.C.; Brooklyn Museum 61.196; after Eggebrecht 1987:160) they are wearing tight fitting caps or lengths of cloth knotted at the back of the head.



Fig. 10:6 Two women wearing either tightly fitting caps with tassels or lengths of cloth knotted at the back (mastaba of Kahif, Giza, 5th Dynasty; Junker 1943, Taf. VI, XIVb)

A third type of kerchief was sometimes worn by people working in dusty or dirty places. A characteristic example is made up of a large square of material placed over the head and hair and then tied in some manner at the back of the nape. Winlock speculated that the construction of this type of headgear was similar to the kerchief described above from the tomb of



Tut'ankhamun, except that it was somewhat large and rectangular in shape, rather than curved and is associated with the *khat* form of kerchief (Winlock 1916:239).

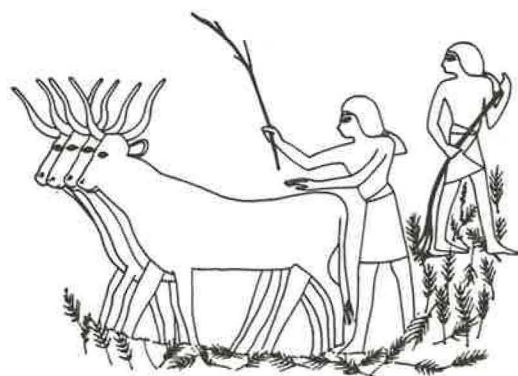


Fig. 10:7 Two men wearing lengths of cloth fastened at the nape of their necks (tomb of Menna, Thebes, 18th Dynasty; Davies 1936, I, pl. LI)

Depictions of this type of headgear become more numerous in New Kingdom sources. For example in the tomb of Menna, several men are depicted wearing lengths of cloth around their heads; there is no evidence to suggest how they were fastened (fig. 10:7; Davies 1936, I, pl. LI). Such headgear was also worn both by men thrashing grain as well as by the men guiding oxen. In each case they are wearing a piece of cloth which covered the hair and which was fastened at the nape of the neck with a tie of some kind, possibly a piece of string. The rest of the cloth hangs in folds down the person's back. It is not clear from these depictions, however, whether there was a separate tie which went round the head or not. This form of kerchief is often associated with winnowers and indeed it is sometimes called a "winnowers' kerchief". Nevertheless it was not the sole prerogative of winnowers. In the New Kingdom tomb of Ipuu for instance, there is a depiction of a group of fishermen wearing kerchiefs over their hair which are tied in a similar manner to that worn by the winnowers (fig. 10:8; N.M. Davies 1936, II, pl. XCVII).

Finally, mourning women can also occasionally be found wearing such headgear. In the tomb of Ra'mose there is a small group of women wearing long kerchiefs tied just behind the nape (fig. 10:9; Davies 1941, pls. XXIV, XLIX). Two of the women are depicted wearing dark coloured skirts with dark kerchiefs, the other two are wearing lighter coloured skirts and kerchiefs. The sashes in all four are white. It is not clear whether the colours used for both the skirts and kerchiefs represent a case of artistic licence or-



Fig. 10:8 Fisherman wearing a kerchief similar to those depicted in figure 10:5 (tomb of Ipuu, Thebes, New Kingdom; Davies 1936, II, pl. XCVII)

whether there were specific groups of mourners who wore such colour combinations.

In conclusion, it can be suggested that at present the evidence for the actual nature of the headgear worn in Ancient Egypt is minimal as few examples have been identified. It is also likely that the skull cap worn by Tut'ankhamun may have been more in keeping with either his royal or funerary status rather than reflecting an everyday item of apparel.



Fig. 10:9 Mourning women wearing long skirts and sashes with kerchiefs over their hair. The alternating figures wear dark skirts and kerchiefs (tomb of Ra'mose, Thebes, New Kingdom; after Davies 1941, pls. XXIV, XLIX)

It is possible that in future the headgear worn by people such as winnowers and fishermen will be identified among extant stretches of cloth, but the likely construction and appearance of the garment is such that it could



easily be overlooked. On the bases of depictions it would seem that the wearing of such items was related to the task in hand, namely, dirty and dusty conditions and it is likely that the Egyptians simply used any suitable length of cloth to tie around their head. It could also be argued that such cloths were worn to protect the head and hair for a specific period, rather than forming an item of everyday clothing. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the wearing of such items would have been the cause for any comment and that they were regularly worn by people working under certain conditions. Thus, they may be regarded as acceptable items within the concept of everyday clothing in Pharaonic Egypt.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS

The last chapter in this study is intended to bring a number of points to the fore, as well as to discuss briefly certain conclusions reached during the course of my research. Firstly, I wish to summarize the typical clothing combinations found during the various periods. For the sake of convenience these résumés are divided into three: Old, Middle and New Kingdom, although it is clear that there is a considerable degree of overlap in clothing styles. Secondly, I will come back to the problem of identifying wrap-around garments.

Before dealing with the two points of discussion noted above, it is worth highlighting a number of observations relating to the construction and identification of garments in Egyptian tomb paintings and other representations. As a rule it would appear that certain, essential details are depicted, for example, neck ties from bag-tunics, fringes, pleats and folds. On the other hand, apparently unattractive features such as the gaping nature of many of these garments were simply glossed over. In general, side seams or hem lines are not depicted, nor are mends and repairs. The concept of a beautiful fit and a perfect garment would appear to be consistent throughout Egypt's early history.

Leading on from the above comments, it should be noted that although it is possible to identify most of the garments represented in Egyptian art, it would be extremely helpful if, for example, the back of statues and statuettes could also be illustrated in catalogues and reports, as potential information about how a garment was draped tends to be lost without such illustrations.

Finally, it can be suggested that in general representations of the garments worn by servants and lesser officials do seem to reflect reality and give a reasonable indication of what was worn on a day-to-day basis. On the other hand, the depicted garments of nobles must be treated with more caution. In all cases, however, it is essential to start with the actual garments before we can judge the accuracy of the representations.



*Clothing Combinations*

As stated in the introduction, it is not the intention of this study to present a fashion history. Rather, the book is meant to be a guide to the identification of actual items of apparel and their appearance among the extant material and in the various forms of Egyptian art. Nevertheless, it would seem useful at this point to summarize the typical and most common garments worn in Pharaonic Egypt, and some of the possible combinations.

*Male Clothing*

Old Kingdom: cloth loincloths; short wrap-around kilts; long, narrow aprons; sashes and straps, and long cloaks

Middle Kingdom: cloth and leather loincloths; wrap-around kilts of various lengths; long, narrow aprons and triangular aprons; sashes and straps; short shawls and long cloaks

New Kingdom: cloth and leather loincloths; wrap-around kilts of various lengths (sometimes two worn together); sash-kilts; triangular aprons; bag-tunic; sashes and straps and knotted and wrap-around cloaks of various kinds

*Female Clothing*

Old Kingdom: cloth loincloths; skirts of various lengths; wrap-around dresses, usually simple forms; bead-net dresses; V-necked dresses; sashes and straps, shawls and long cloaks

Middle Kingdom: cloth loincloths; skirts of various lengths; wrap-around dresses, usually simple forms; V-necked dresses; sashes and straps; shawls and long cloaks

New Kingdom: cloth loincloths, skirts of various lengths; wrap-around dresses, both simple forms and more complex variations; sashes and straps; bag-tunics, shawls and long cloaks

It is clear from the above summary that there would appear to be little difference between the basic type of clothing worn during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, but by the New Kingdom numerous changes had occurred. The most notable developments are the introduction of the leather loincloth and bag-tunic, and the attention paid to complex wrap-around garments. It also becomes apparent that throughout the Pharaonic period the range of garments worn by women is more limited and more

conservative than that worn by men. This difference may relate to the more visible, social role of men, for example as officials, or it may simply refer to the fact that more men are depicted in tomb paintings, than women. It is essential, therefore, that more detailed recording of cloth, from both male and female burials, is carried out in order to provide more information about this point.

*The Identification of Wrap-around Garments*

As noted previously, one of the aims of this book is to provide a guide to the identification of items from an Egyptian clothing chest. As can be seen from the previous chapters, the identification of cut-to-shape garments is relatively simple and need not be re-stated at this point. The basic problems lie with the wrap-around garments; when is a length of cloth a woman's skirt, a man's kilt or a piece of bedding? It is necessary at this point to provide more specific information concerning the length of cloth and the type of wear marks associated with specific wrap-around garments, both male and female. It is inevitable that these points have to be generalized as the size of people in general is variable (a rough allowance, however, of  $\pm 20$  cm would seem reasonable).

The information about garment sizes and wear patterns provided below has been based on surviving garments and experiments in reconstructing ancient garments. It should be stressed that the measurements are averages and without collaborative evidence. It cannot be taken as an absolute fact that a length of cloth three metres by one is inevitably a woman's skirt.

	Length	Width	(in cm)
man's archaic tunic	245	75	
man's short kilt			
. workman's	120	60	
. official	200	60	
man's long kilt	300	100	
sash kilt	250	60	
woman's long skirt	300	80	
women's dresses	300	110	
(without pleats)			
short shawl	128	120	
long wrap-around cloak			
simple	140	120	
complex	300	120	



The question remains how much cloth would be needed for a person's attire. Based on finds in tombs and on representations, it would seem that a basic New Kingdom wardrobe for a reasonably affluent person would consist of the following garments (one set only):

Male garment      Amount of cloth (approximate length only, in metres)

loincloth	1.0
apron	0.5
kilt	2.0
long kilt	3.0
sash-kilt	3.0
long bag-tunic	4.0
short bag-tunic	3.0
cloak	3.0

Female garment      Amount of cloth (approximate length only, in metres)

loincloth	1.0
wrap-around skirt	3.0
simple wrap-around dress	3.0
complex wrap-around dress	4.0
sash	2.0
cloak	3.0

As can be seen from above, it would be necessary to have about twenty metres of cloth to make a basic wardrobe for a man, while a smaller amount of cloth is required to make a woman's wardrobe. In fact, such extensive lengths of cloth are found in Ancient Egyptian contexts. It is likely that some of them, especially those with loops woven into the main web of the material, were used as some form of mattress, as can be seen by finds from the tomb of Kha (Donadoni-Roveri 1987, pl. 199, 295). Nevertheless, comparable lengths of cloth, left unpiled, may well have formed all the material needed for a person's wardrobe. It is worth noting that the presentation of lengths of cloth has played, as it still does, an important role at specific occasions in many countries throughout the world. For example, large quantities of cloth are given at engagements and weddings in Afghanistan for the making of trousseaux and garments for later use during

married life.<sup>1</sup> As said in the opening chapter of this book, it should not be forgotten that until the time of mass production, textiles often formed a valuable item, and the exchange of lengths of cloth, either as a present, a reward, or for instance as part of the marriage contract, was a normal occurrence.

The study of Pharaonic Egyptian material culture, in all its aspects, has been seriously hampered in the past by a lack of detailed information about where and under what conditions objects were found and how they were made. Yet, as I hope to have shown in this guide to Ancient Egyptian clothing, textiles were an important element in Egyptian life and many details can be reconstructed following a study of the actual garments and a comparison between them and representations of clothing. It has also become clear during the course of writing this study that there are many potential areas of future research, not least of which is the matching together of known types of textiles and clothing with the written Egyptian terminology.

<sup>1</sup> See for example, Doubleday 1988:125-126; 188. Lane referred to the giving of cloth in lieu of wages in nineteenth century Egypt (Lane 1895:66).



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AAA	-	<i>Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology of the Liverpool Institute of Archaeology, Liverpool</i>
ARCE	-	<i>American Research Center, Egypt, Cairo</i>
ASAE	-	<i>Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Cairo</i>
ATN	-	<i>Archaeological Textiles Newsletter, Leiden</i>
BES	-	<i>Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar, New York</i>
BIFAO	-	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Cairo</i>
BMFA	-	<i>Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston</i>
BMMA	-	<i>Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York</i>
BMRAH	-	<i>Bulletin van de Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis, Brussels</i>
Bull. CIETA	-	<i>Bulletin de la Centre International d'Étude des Textiles Anciens, Lyons</i>
DHAT	-	<i>Dyes on Historical and Archaeological Textiles, York</i>
DE	-	<i>Discussions in Egyptology, Oxford</i>
GM	-	<i>Göttinger Miszellen, Göttingen</i>
JEA	-	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, London</i>
MÄS	-	<i>Münchener Ägyptologische Studien, Berlin</i>
Mon. Piot.	-	<i>Foundation Piot Monuments et Mémoires Piot, Paris</i>
RAA	-	<i>Revue des Arts Asiatiques, Paris</i>
RE	-	<i>Revue Égyptologique, Paris</i>
RSE	-	<i>Rassegna di Studi Etiopici, Rome</i>
RE	-	<i>Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes, Paris</i>
SAK	-	<i>Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur, Hamburg</i>
ZÄS	-	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde, Leipzig, Berlin</i>

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## INDICES

Index of personal names, with a reference to the tombs referred to in the text.

BH - Beni Hasan  
G - Giza  
TT - Theban Tomb  
VK - Valley of the Kings  
VQ - Valley of the Queens

Achait (Thebes) 103, 104, 157	75, 131, 132, 136, 139, 141, 165-167, 182
Ahmose I 174, 175	Kha-bauw-sokar 37, 38
Akhethetep 167	Khemka 128
Amenemhet (BH 2) 146	Khety (BH 17) 76, 152
Amenhikhopeshef (VQ 55) 80, 81	Khnumhotep 6, 58, 69, 70, 89, 90
Amenhotep 30	Khufu 125
'Ankhm'ahor 36, 41, 43, 85	Mahirper (VK 36) 17, 18, 22, 24, 29
Ankhtify (Mo'alla) 47, 48	Meketre (TT 280) 150, 151
Anta 35, 70, 77, 78	Mena (Dendara) 44, 45
Antef (Asasif) 37, 42, 43, 50-52	Menna (TT 69) 27, 39-41, 77, 145-148,
Antefoker 85	167, 168, 170, 176
Dehuti-Hetep (el Bersheh) 43, 44,	Mentuhotep 98, 103, 134
83, 84, 157, 163-165	Mereruka 54, 55
Djet 115	Merneptah 142
Emsaef (Thebes) 104	Mersyankh 86, 166
Fetekta (Asyut) 91	Meryra (Amarna) 111, 145, 148
Hatnefer (Sheikh 'Abd el-Qurneh) 2,	Mose (TT 254) 2, 65, 66, 107, 108, 145,
131, 139	146, 176, 177
Hatshepsut 73, 76, 77	Nakht 132, 133, 139, 150, 151
Henhenet (Deir el-Bahri) 98, 99	Nakhtamun (TT 341) 167, 168
Horemheb (TT 78) 15, 16, 162, 163	Nakhti 91, 93, 128
Huy (TT 40) 26, 27, 66-68, 80, 82, 109,	Neb-nefer 67
110, 149, 171	Nefery 45
Ibi (TT 36) 63, 84	Neset 112, 113
Idu (G7102) 44, 46, 84	Niankhkhnum (Saqqara) 58, 69, 70,
Idut (Saqqara) 56, 58, 62, 63, 90, 102	89, 90
Ipuy (TT 217) 176, 177	Nofret 160, 161
Iti 144	Nufer (Saqqara) 42, 61
Kahay 42, 61	Nyhetep-ptah (Giza) 36
Kahif (Giza) 174, 175	Pendenyt 82
Kawit 157, 158	Piye 90
Ken-Amun (TT 96) 30, 54, 68, 69	Ptahhetep 166
Kha (TT 8) 12, 13, 37, 38, 55-58, 64,	Ra'mose (TT 55) 2, 65, 66, 107, 108,
	176, 177

Ra'mose (TT 55) 2, 65, 66, 107, 108,  
176, 177  
Rameses III 74, 80, 142  
Rekhmire (TT 100) 14, 15, 23-26, 29,  
30, 56, 57, 60, 77, 78, 97, 105,  
147, 148  
Senbi (Meir B1) 51, 52  
Seneb 62  
Senenmut 131, 132  
Sennefer 113  
Sensebek 45  
Set-Ka (Aswan) 47, 48  
Seti II 133, 139, 142  
Sobekhotep (TT 63) 78, 79  
Tetiky (TT 15) 106  
Thanuny (TT 74) 26, 28, 30, 78, 79,  
148, 153, 154

Ti (Saqqara) 13, 14, 35, 36, 56-59, 75,  
76, 79, 80, 82-84, 114, 115  
Tiye 171  
Tut'ankhamun (VK) 2, 11, 13, 14, 54,  
73-75, 80, 81, 132, 136, 138-142,  
148, 155, 156, 166, 170-177  
Tuthmosis III (VK) 29  
Tuthmosis IV (VK) 19, 24, 28  
Ukh-hotep (Meir C1) 100, 105, 162  
Unas 102  
User (TT 21) 114  
Userhat (TT 56) 28  
Wehemka 165  
Zeserkara'sonb (TT 38) 148

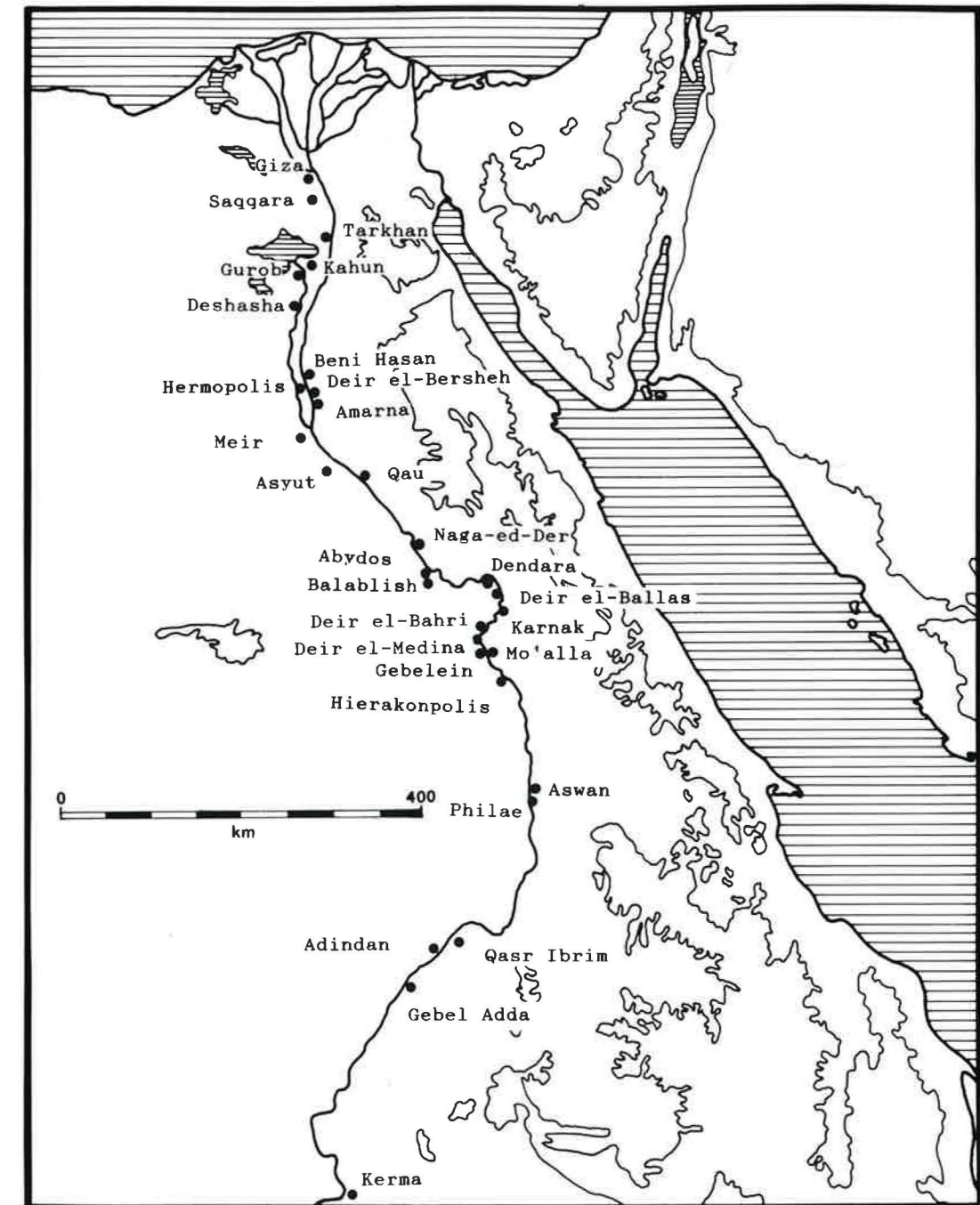
## Index of geographical names.

Abydos 18  
Adindan 21  
Amarna 12-14, 73, 75, 111, 132,  
136-138, 145, 148, 158, 159, 171  
Asasif 17, 18, 22, 37, 50  
Aswan 48, 49  
Asyut 91, 94, 119, 124, 128  
Beni Hasan 6, 15, 76, 146, 153  
Deir el-Bahri 19, 98, 103, 157  
Deir el-Ballas 18  
Deir el-Medina 11, 132  
Dendara 45  
Deshasha 3, 35, 54, 70, 77, 78, 97, 116,  
125  
Diospolis Parva 18  
el-Bersheh 38, 39, 44, 126, 157, 165  
Gebel Adda 33, 34, 47-49, 52  
Gebelein 117, 118, 121-124, 144, 155  
Giza 36, 42, 43, 45, 55, 56, 61, 62, 64,  
84, 86, 111, 112, 125, 126, 165,  
166, 174, 175  
Gurob 134, 137  
Hermopolis 158, 159, 170  
Hierakonpolis 160

Kahun 134  
Karnak 105, 113, 159, 171  
Kerma 20, 22  
Meir 51, 100, 101, 105, 119, 161, 162  
Mo'alla 48  
Naga-ed-Der 118, 121, 124  
Philae 48-50  
Qasr Ibrim 33, 48, 49  
Qau 125, 126  
Saqqara 13, 14, 36, 41, 56, 58, 59, 61,  
63, 70, 75, 76, 79, 80, 83, 84, 89,  
90, 102, 105, 112, 114, 115, 127,  
166, 167, 173  
Sheikh 'Abd el-Qurneh 64  
Tarkhan 115, 124, 135, 138, 143, 150,  
151  
Thebes 2, 11, 14, 17, 19, 24, 26, 29, 61,  
64, 66-69, 73, 74, 76-79, 81, 82,  
84, 85, 90, 97, 105, 106, 108, 110,  
134, 138, 139, 141, 145-151, 154,  
155, 157, 162, 163, 168, 170, 173,  
176, 177

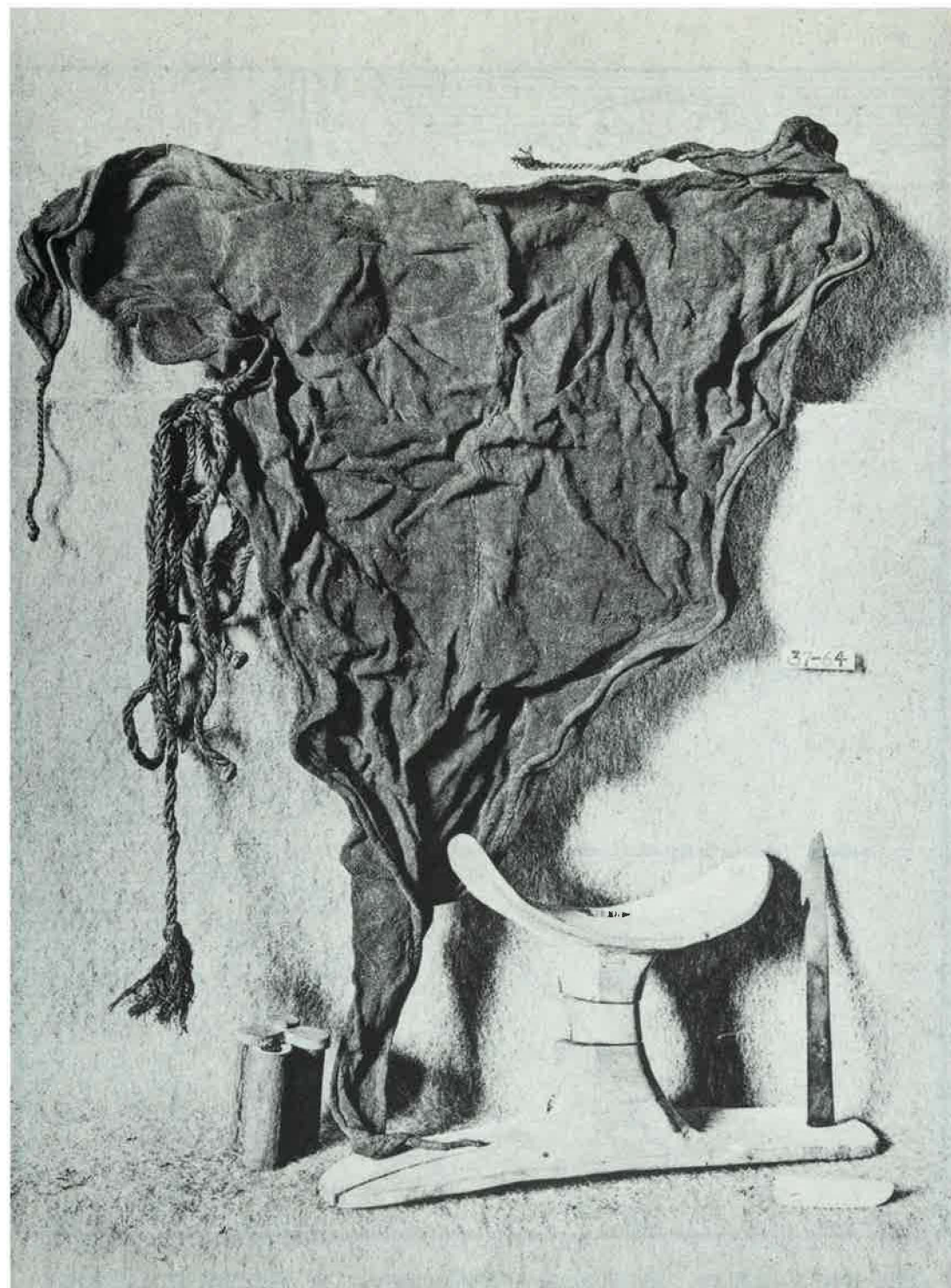


MAPS AND PLATES



Map 1. Map of Egypt and Nubia showing the position of the sites and tombs referred to in the text



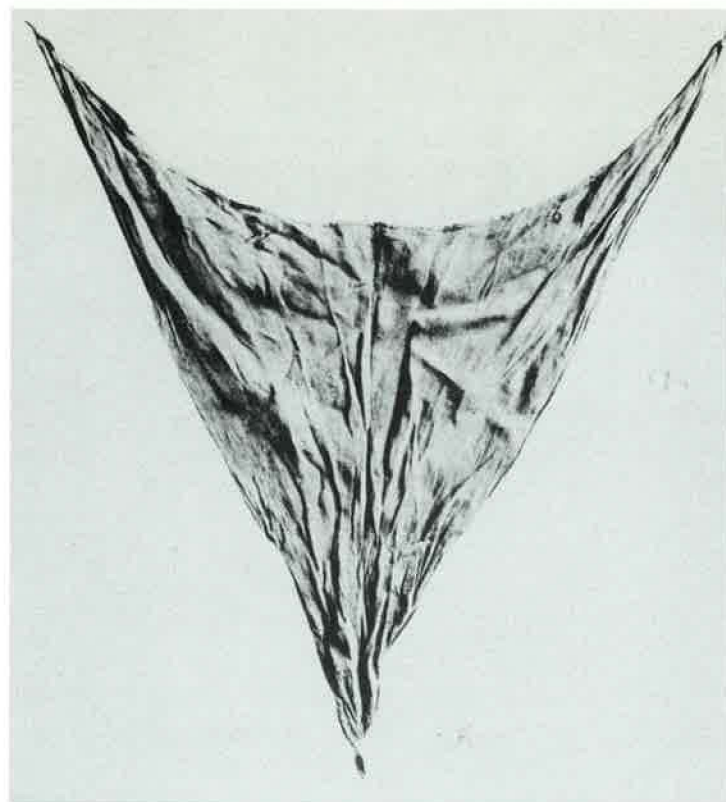


1. Cloth loincloth from Thebes (after Carnarvon and Carter 1912, pl. LXIX:1)



2. Cloth loincloth and kerchief from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (EM 758; author's photograph)

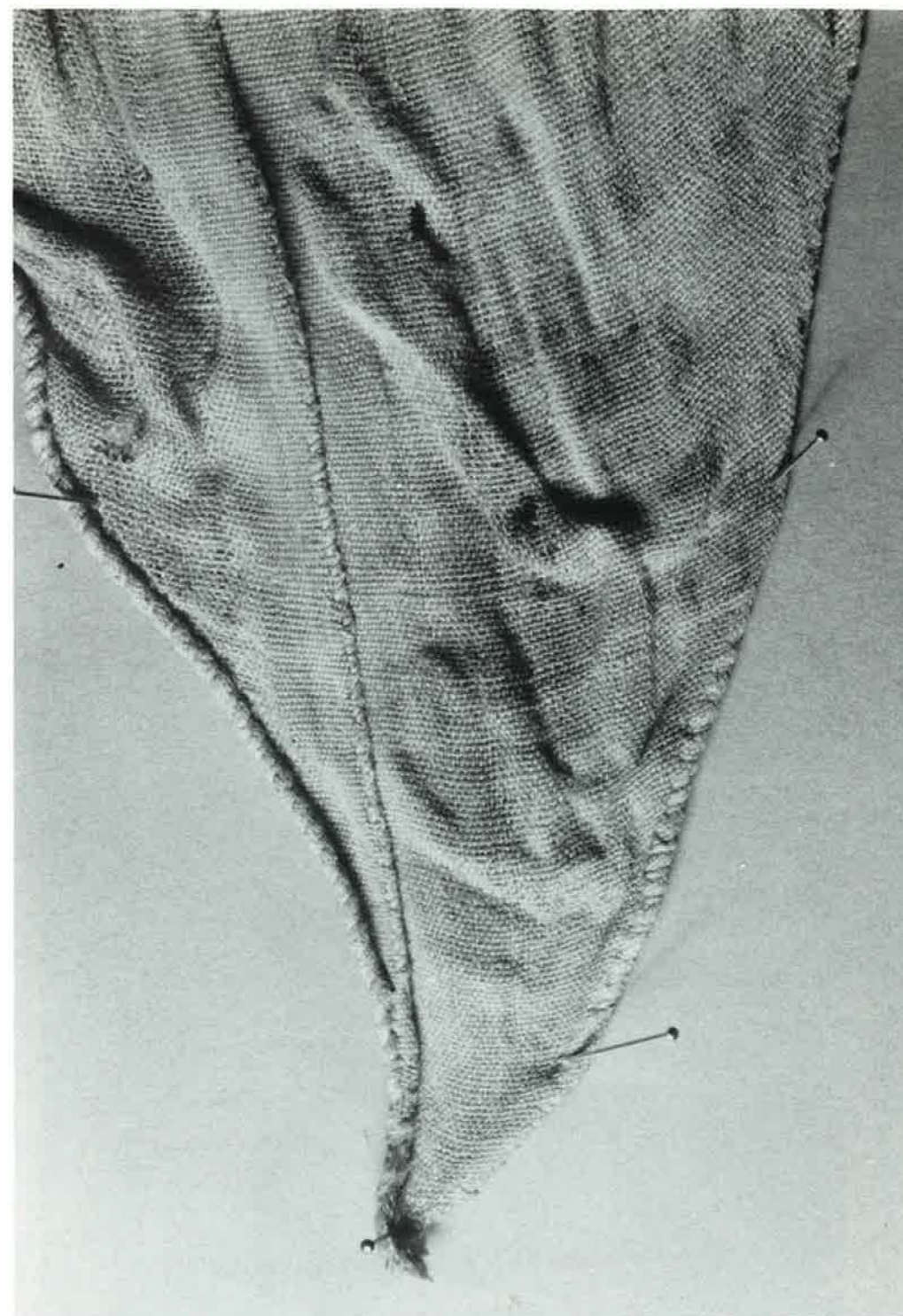




3a. Cloth loincloths from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 62)



3b. Pile of cloth loincloths from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli 1927, fig. 64)

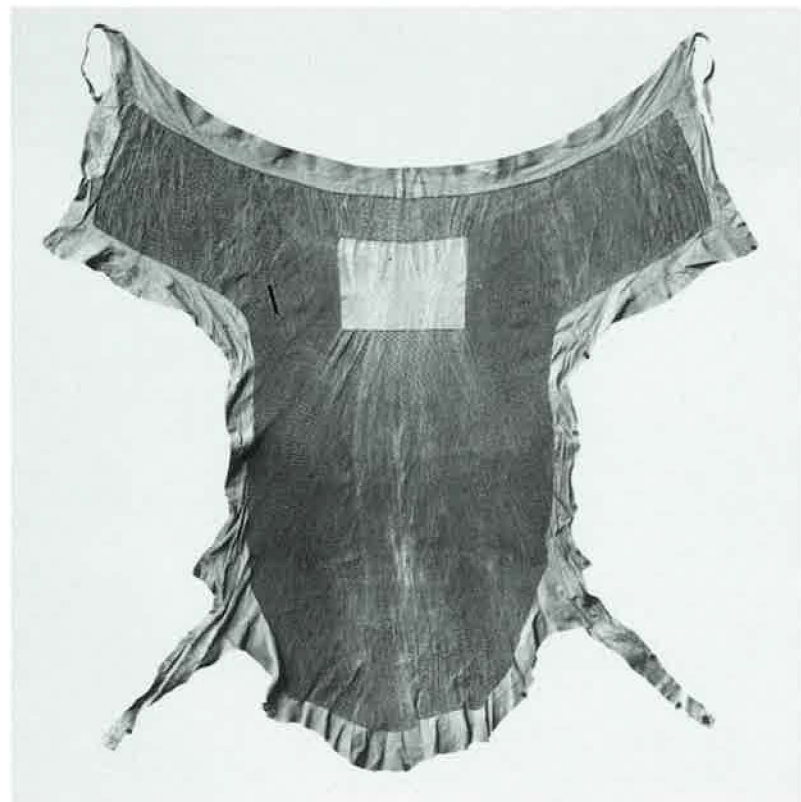


4. Point of a cloth loincloth now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM #T.62, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)

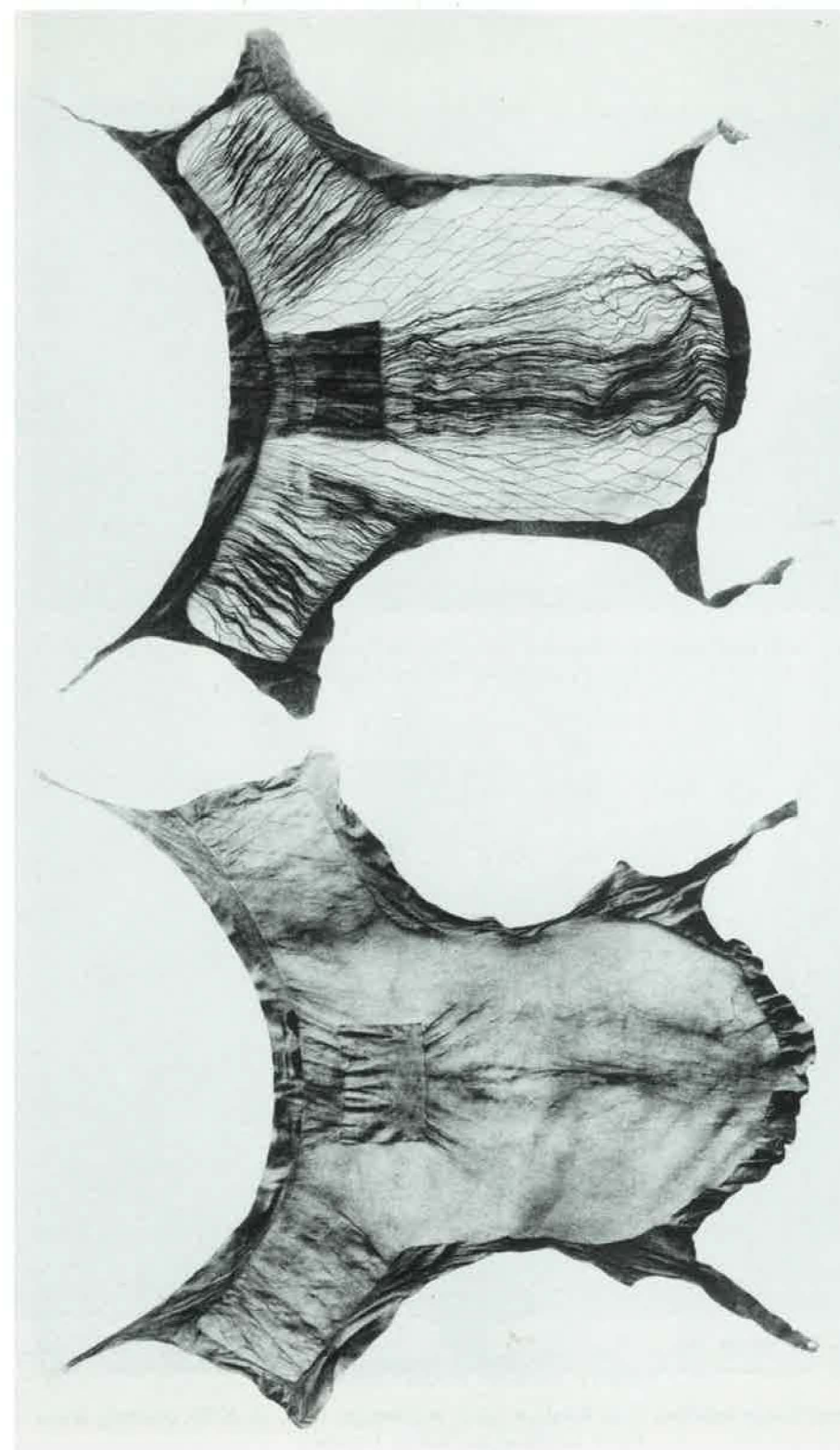




5. Remains of a stained leather loincloth (#31.3.71, Rogers Fund, 1931, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

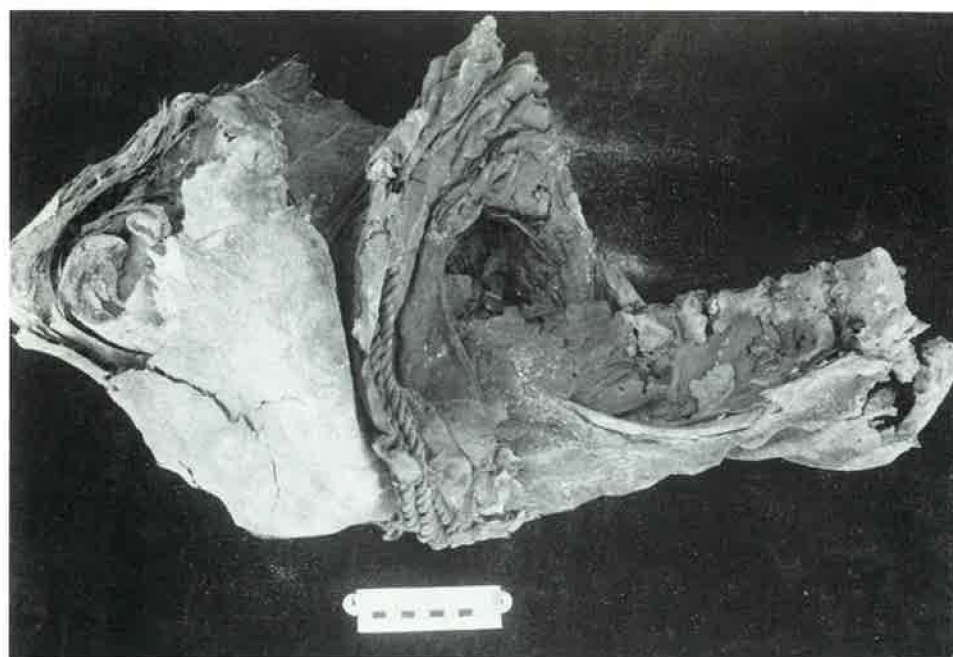


6. Leather loincloth found in the tomb of Mahirper, Thebes (Acc. #03.1035, Gift of Theodore M. Davies, courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

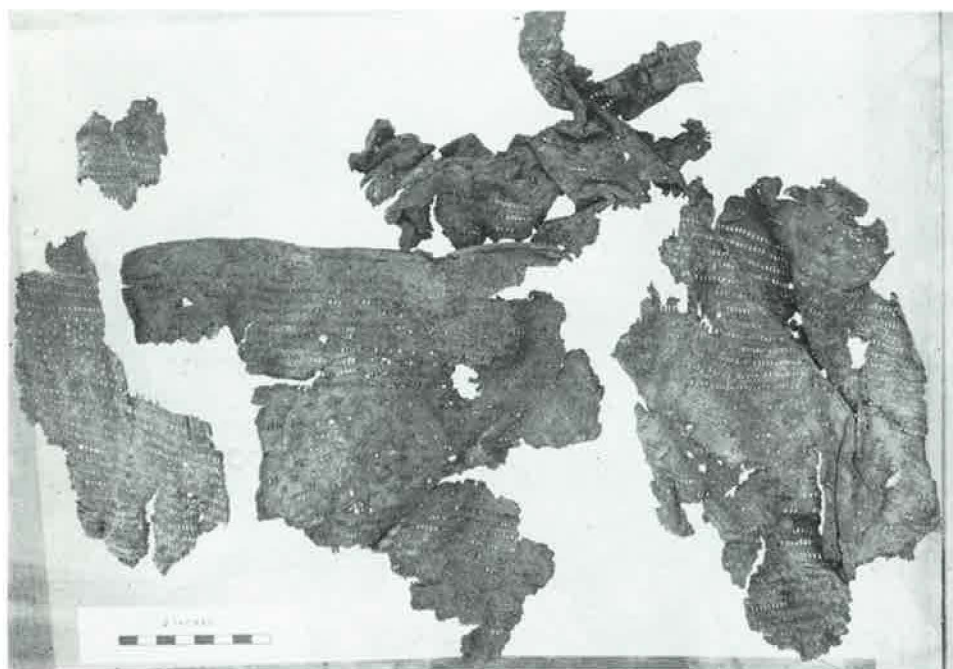


7. The two leather loincloths found in the tomb of Mahirper, Thebes (a) is now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (see pl. 6); (b) was sent to the Field Museum, Chicago (after Carter 1903:46-47)

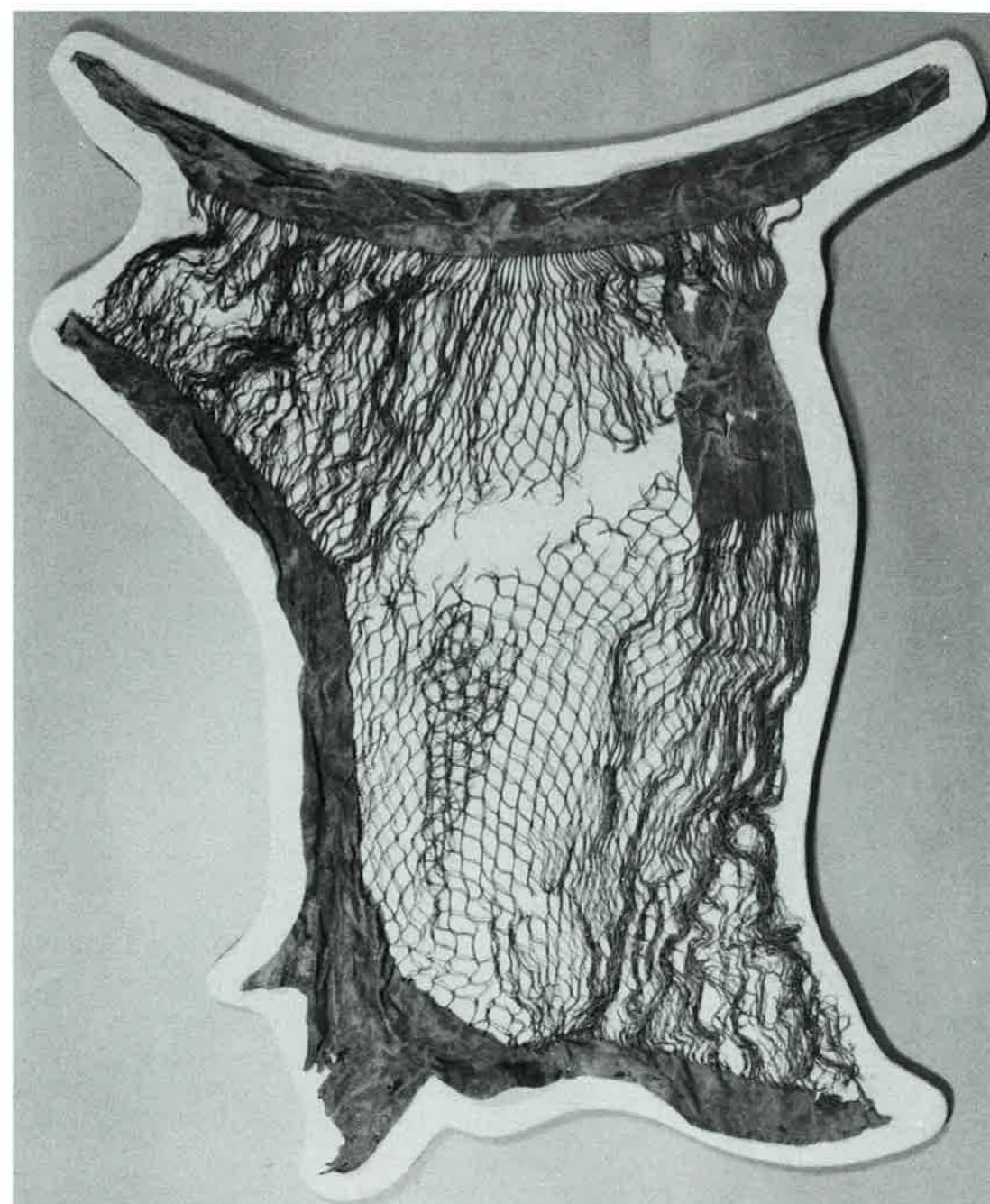




8. Undecorated leather garment from Balabish (after Wainwright 1920, pl. IX, courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society, London)



9. Pierced leather loincloth from Balabish (after Wainwright 1920, pl. X:20, courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society, London)

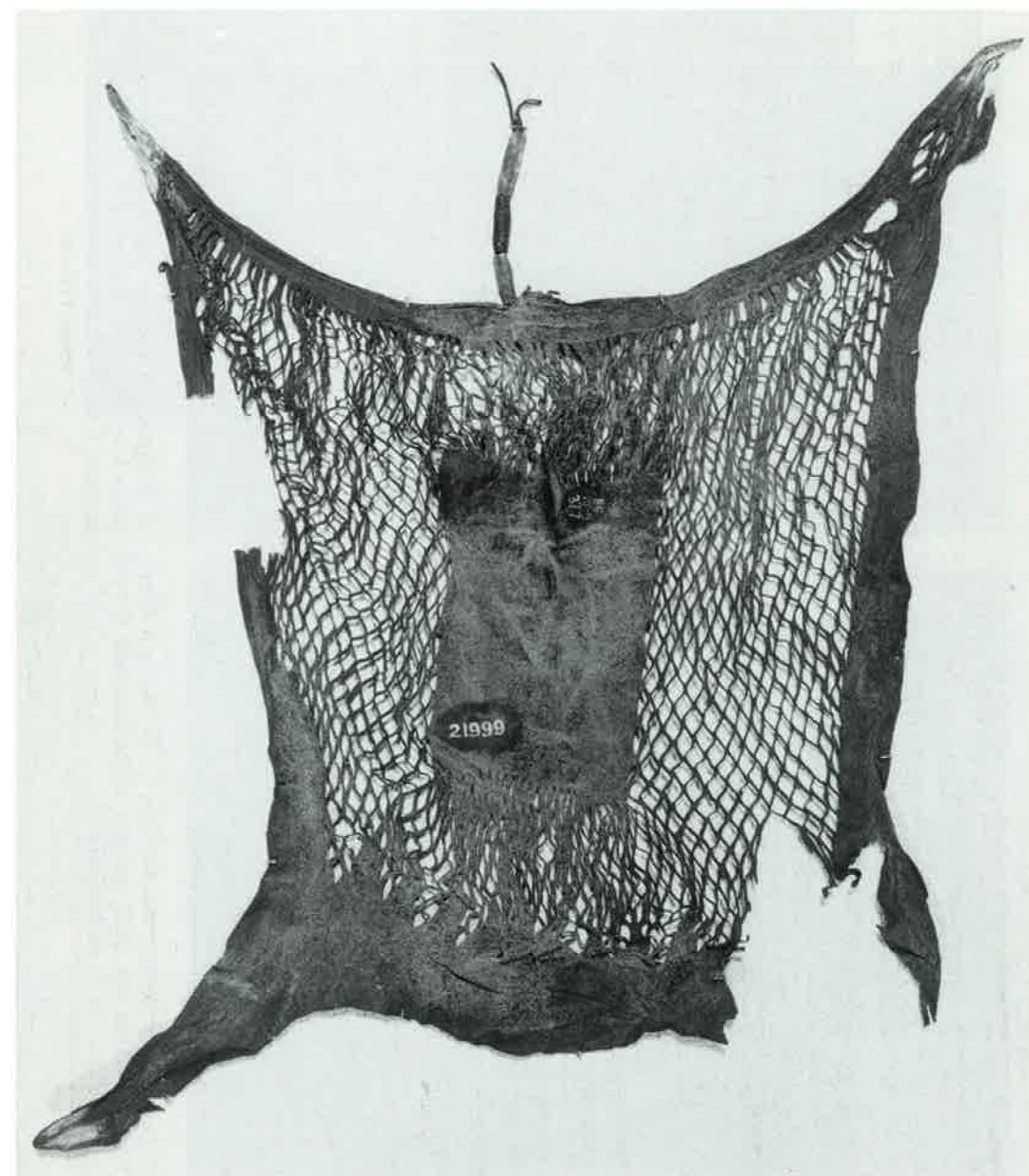


10. One of two leather loincloths now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM 910.105.1, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)



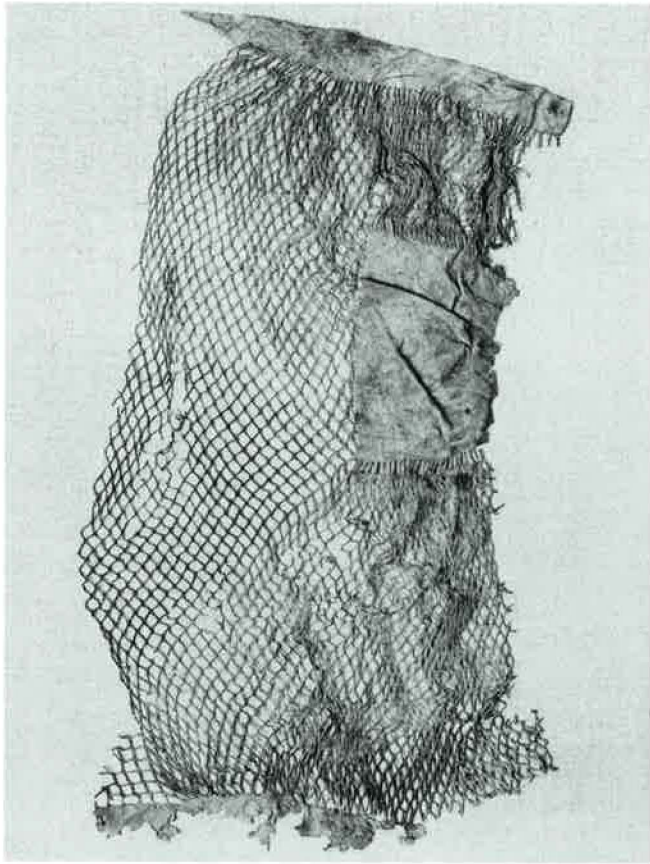


11. Leather loincloth now in the British Museum, London (BM 2564, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London)

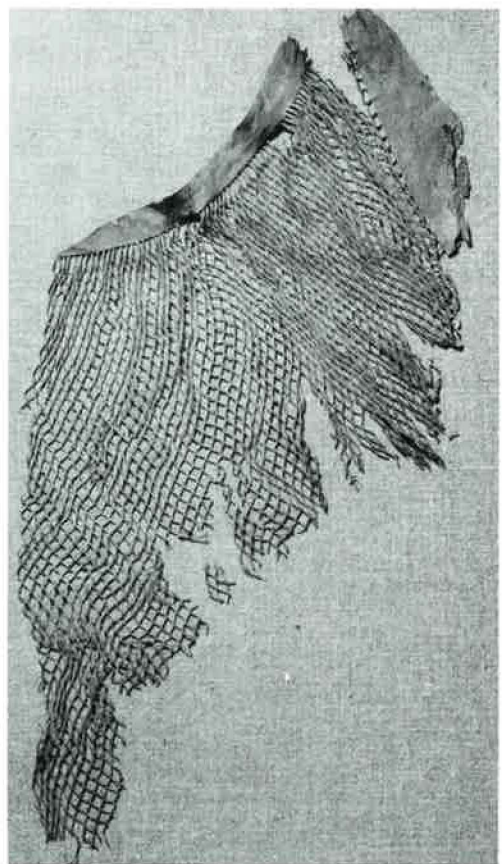


12. Child's leather loincloth now in the British Museum, London (BM 21999, courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London)

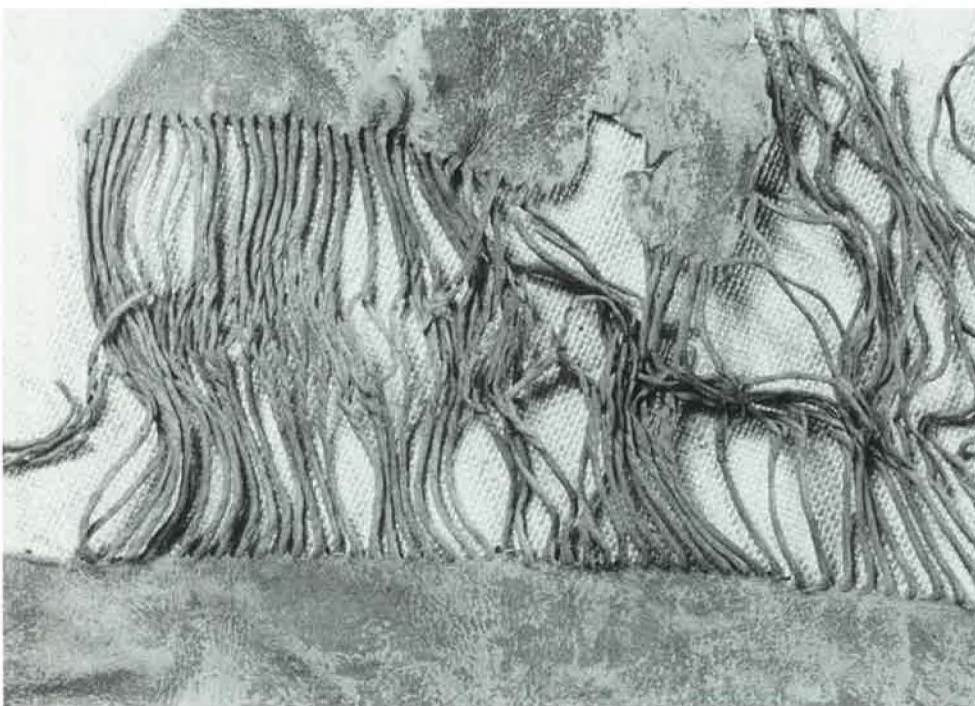




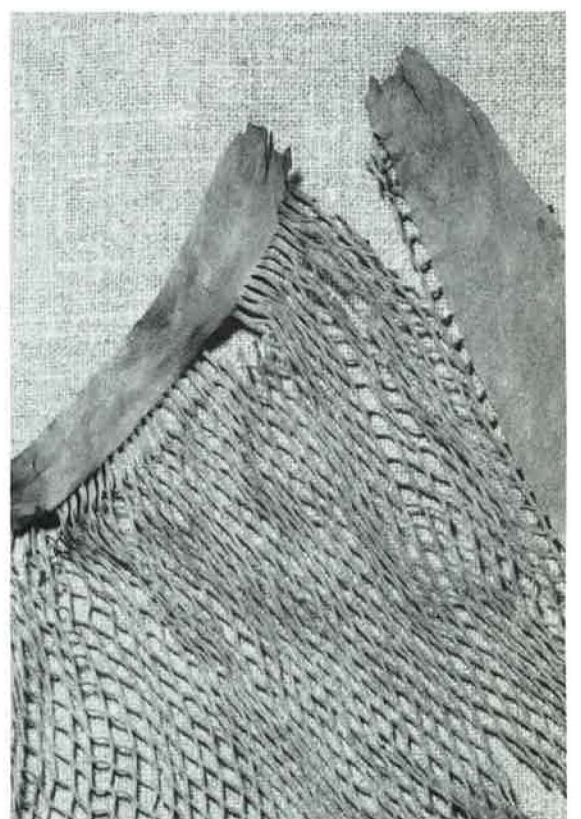
13. Fragment of a leather loincloth now in the Museum Alter Plastik, Frankfurt (no. 2652, courtesy of the Städtische Galerie Liebieghaus)



14. Fragment of a leather loincloth now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (no. 1882.15, courtesy of the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)



15. Close-up of the twisting technique used on a fragment of leather loincloth now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM 910.105.1, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)

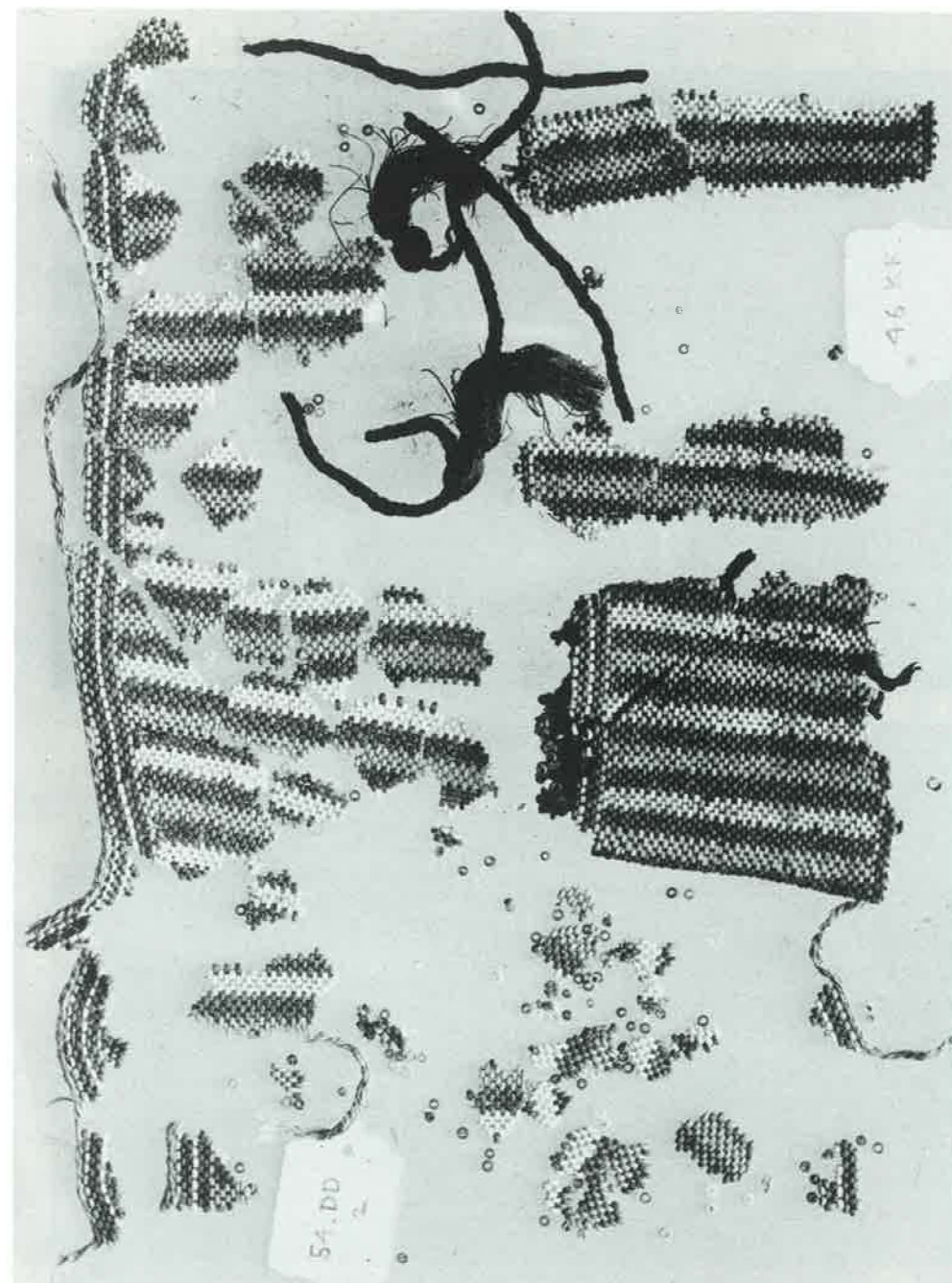


16. Close-up of the slitting technique used on a fragment of leather loincloth now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (no. 1882.15, courtesy of the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)





17. Meroitic apron from Gebel Adda, Nubia (ROM u 62, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)



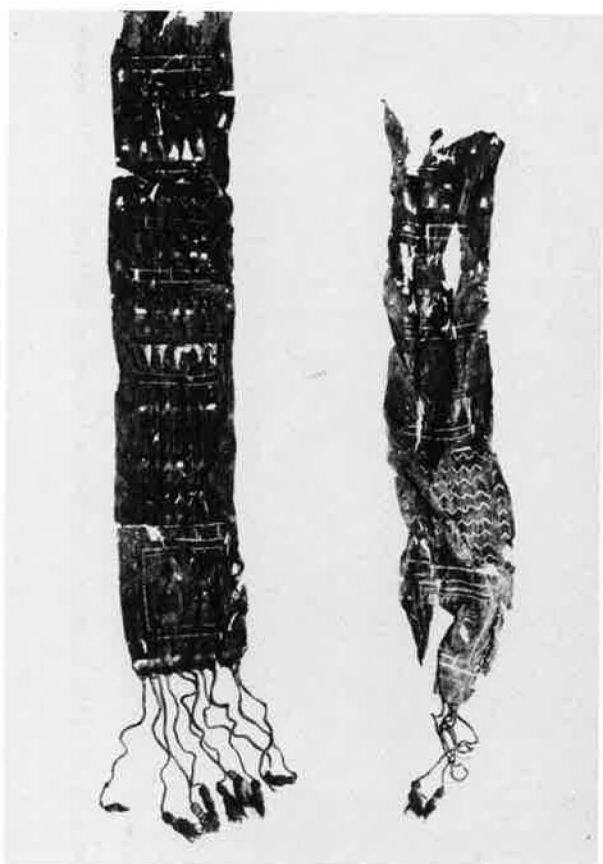
18. Beaded 'kilt' from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (Carter's no. 46.kk, courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)



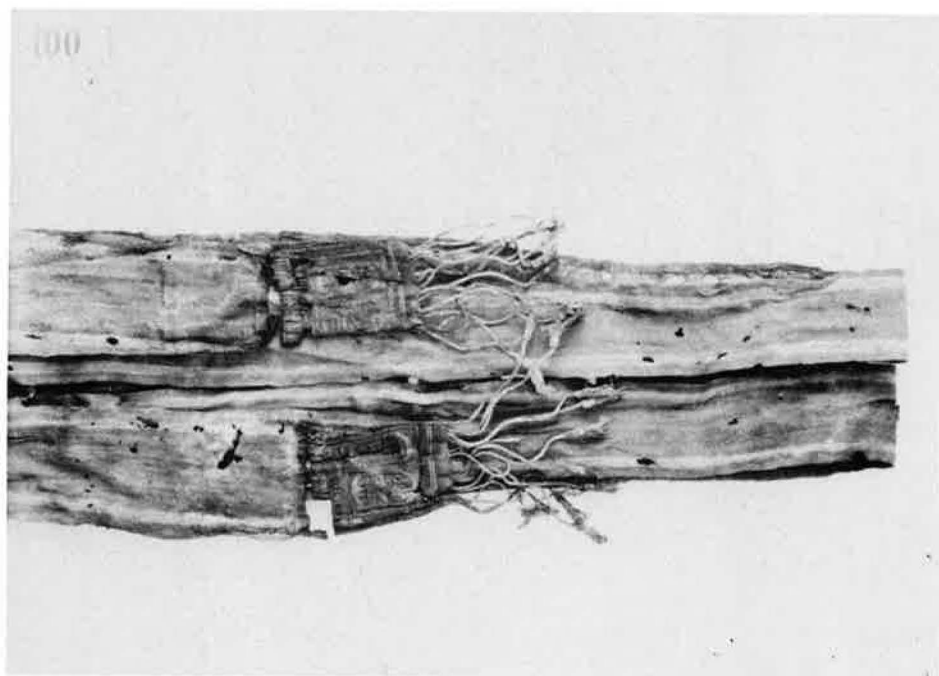
19. Fringed sash from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (courtesy of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)



20. Plain sash now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden (provenance unknown, prov. acc. no. 320, courtesy of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden)



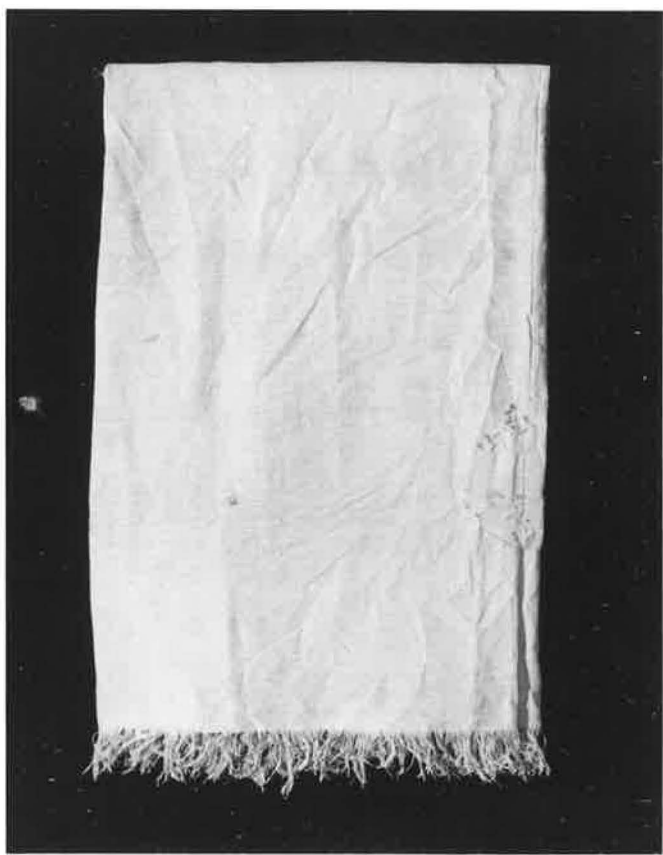
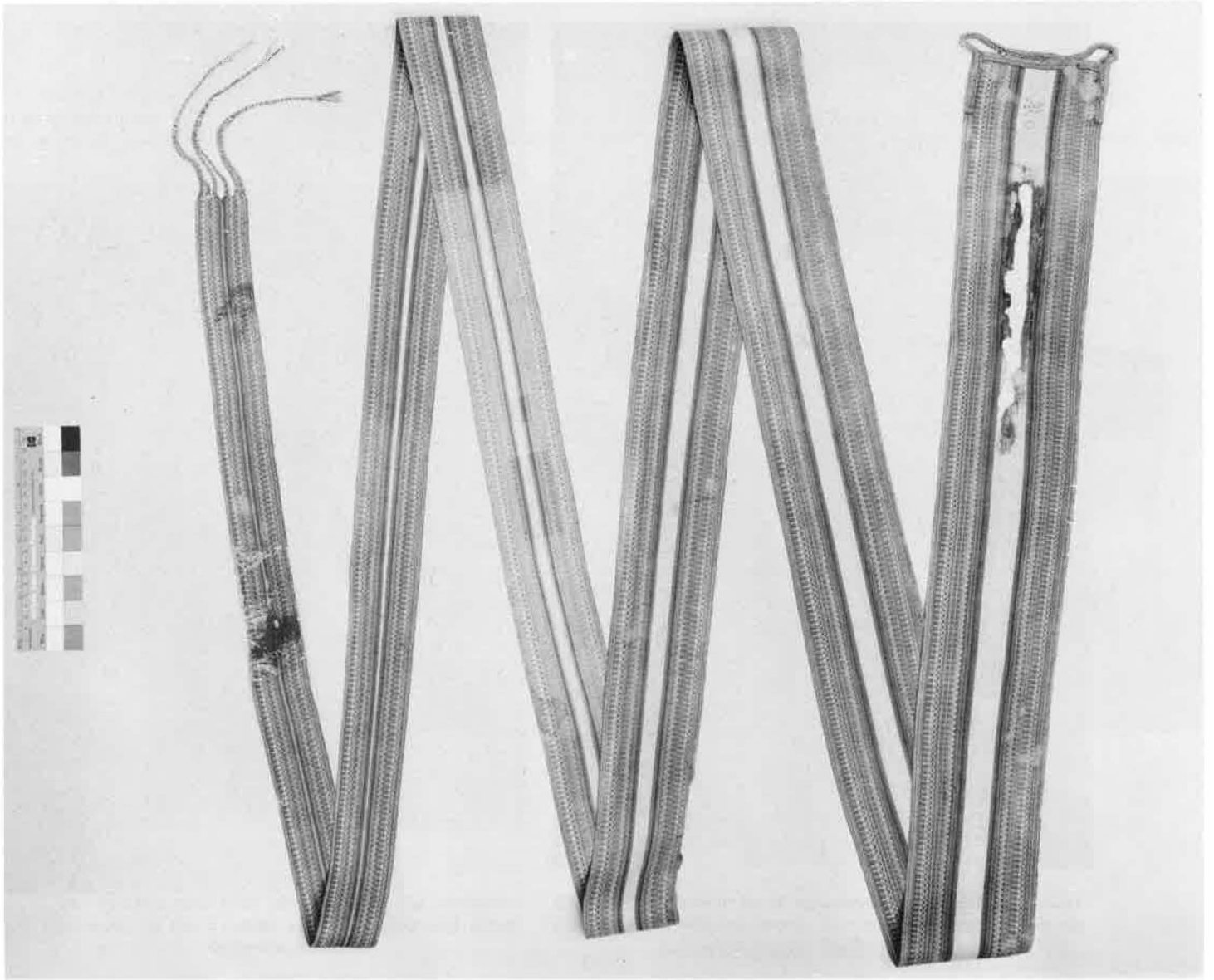
21a. Tapestry ends from two elaborate sashes found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (nos. 21ff, 21ee, courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)



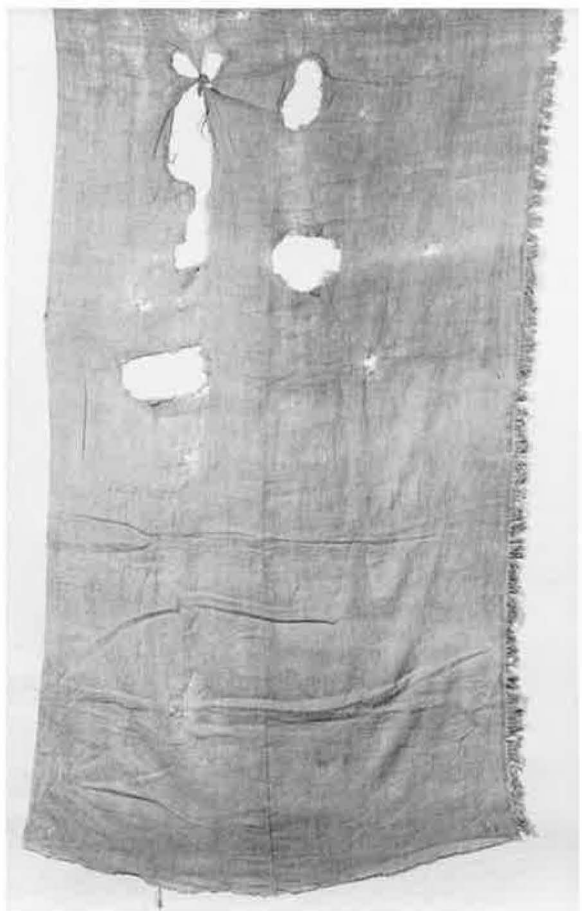
21b. Tapestry end from an elaborate sash found in the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (no. 100f, courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)



22. The girdle of Ramesses III (M. 11158, courtesy of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, Liverpool)



23. Wrap-around dress now in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (ROM 906.18.41, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)



24. Wrap-around dress now in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (E.6204, courtesy of the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels)



25. Photograph of a V-necked 'dress' found at Giza (courtesy of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)



26. The Tarkhan dress (UC 28614 Bi, courtesy of the Petrie Museum, London)





27. Two dresses from Deshasha (UC 31182 and 31183, courtesy of the Petrie Museum, London)



28. Pleated V-necked dress found at Gebelein (after Hall and Pedrini 1984, pl. XXII)



29. Pleated V-necked dress from Naga-ed-Der (u 34.56, courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

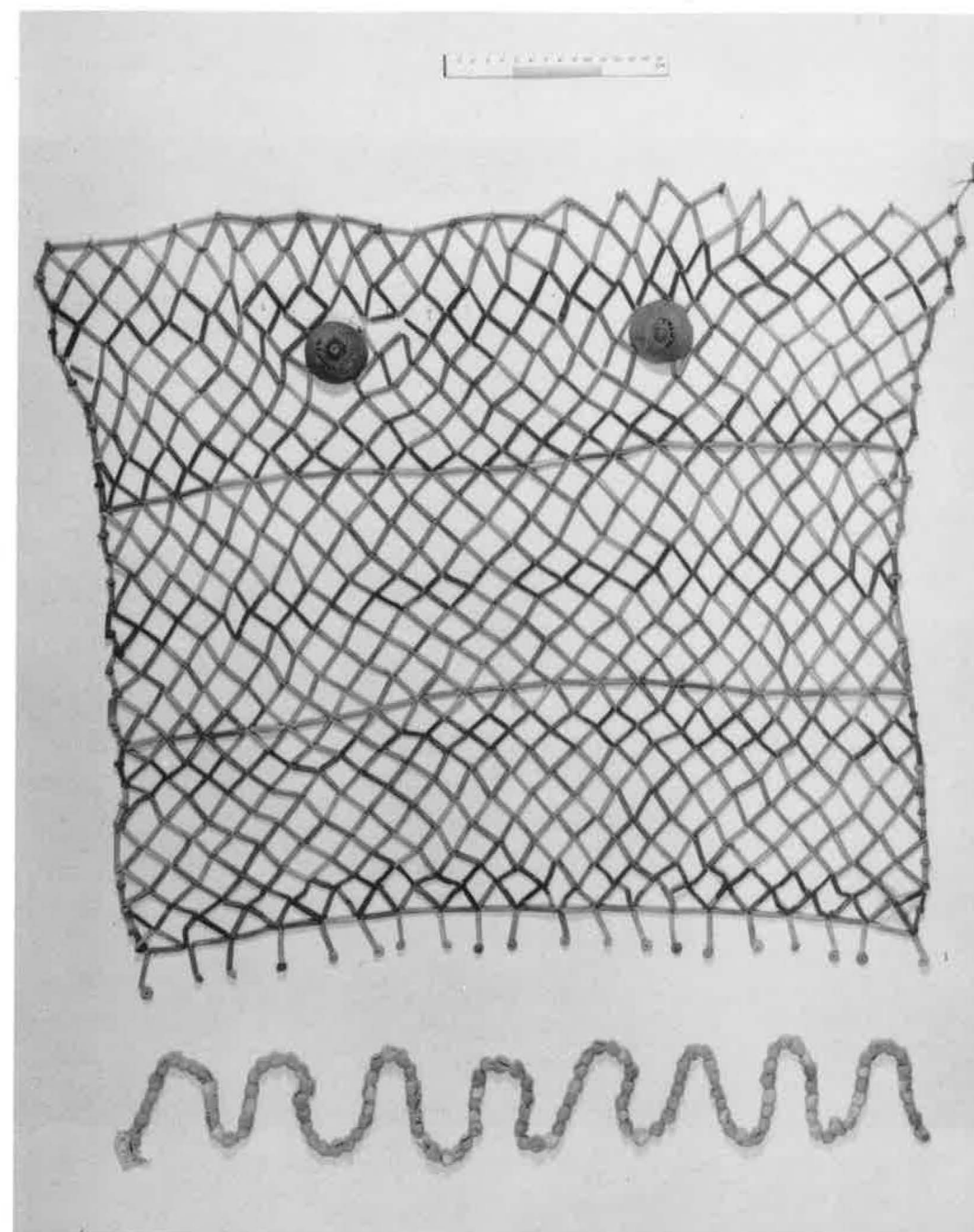


30. Pleated V-necked dress from Asyut (Louvre 12026, courtesy of the Louvre Museum, Paris, copyright Photo R.M.N.)

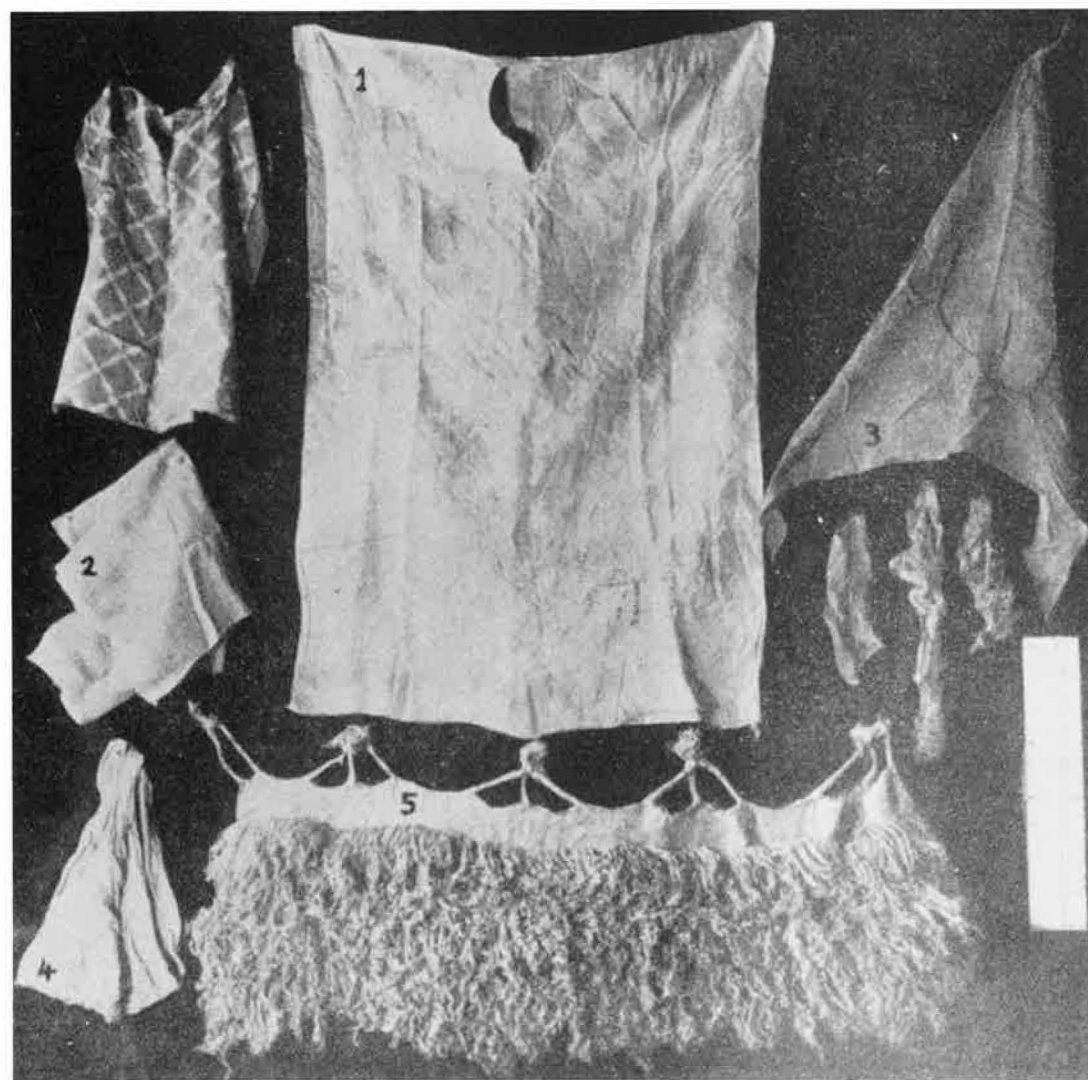




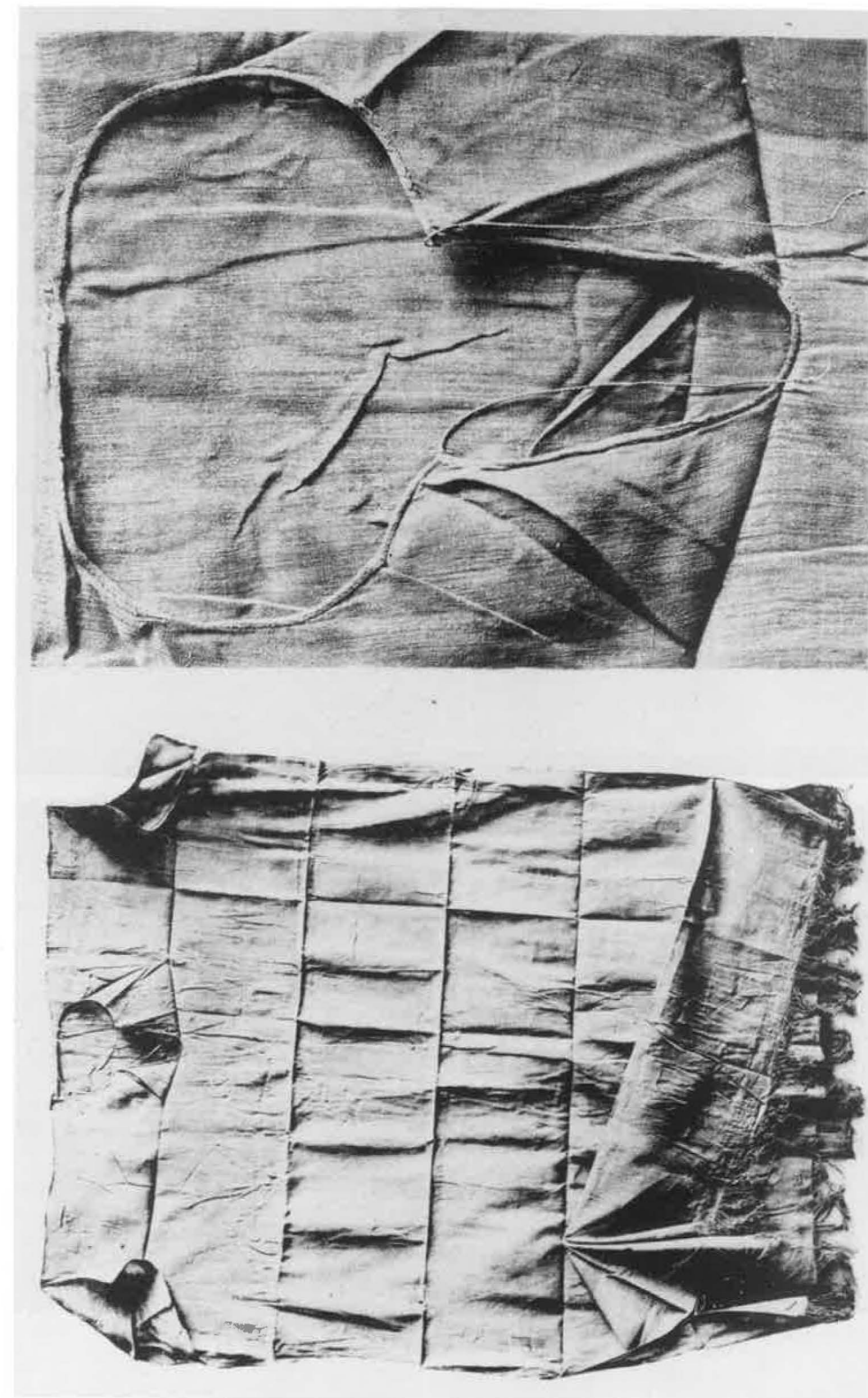
31. Bead-net dress from Giza (u 27.1548, courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)



32. Bead-net dress from Qau (UC 17743, courtesy of the Petrie Museum, London)

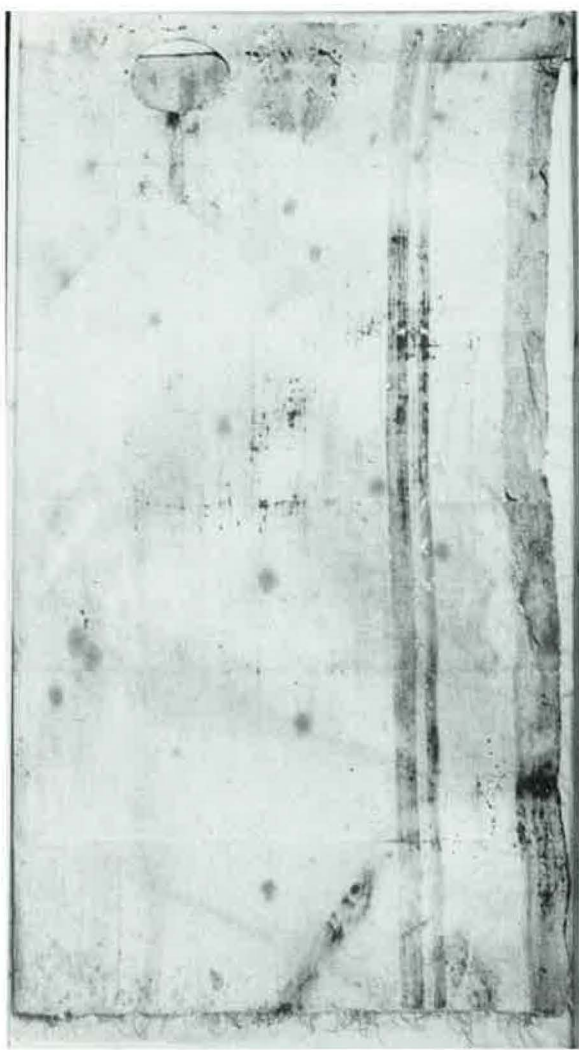


33. Bag-tunic found at Deir el-Medinah (after Bruyère 1937, II, fig. 31:1)



34. Plain bag-tunic from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli 1927, pl. 68)





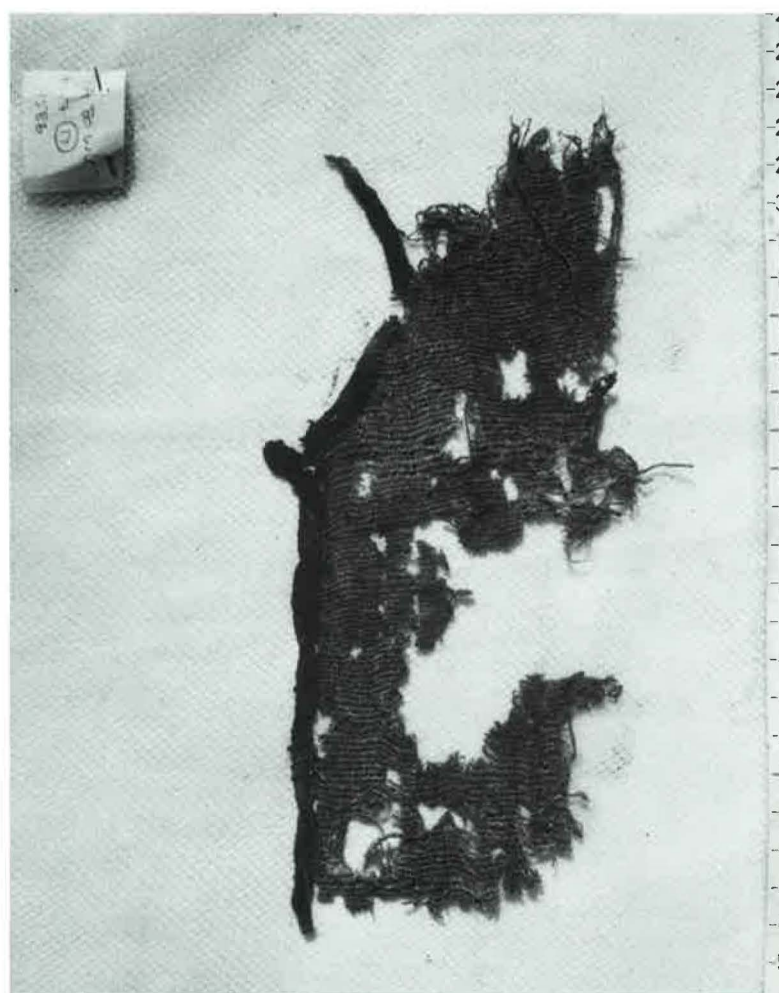
35. Undecorated bag-tunic from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (courtesy of the Trustees of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London)



36. Bag-tunic found around the mummy of Nakht the weaver (#910.4.3.1, courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto)

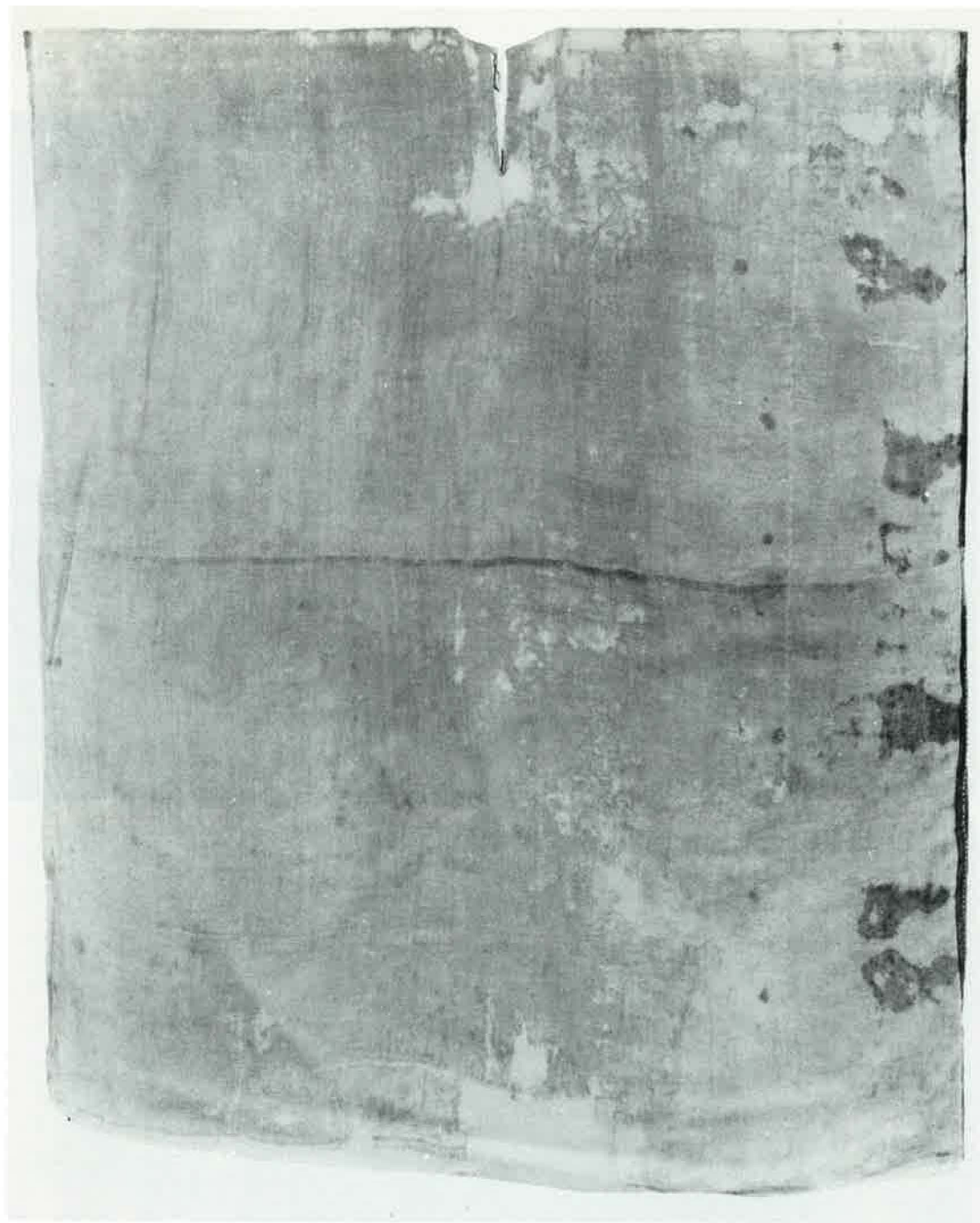


37. Child's tunic found in a grave at the temple of Mentuhotep, Thebes (MMA 25.3.215, Rogers Fund, 1925, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

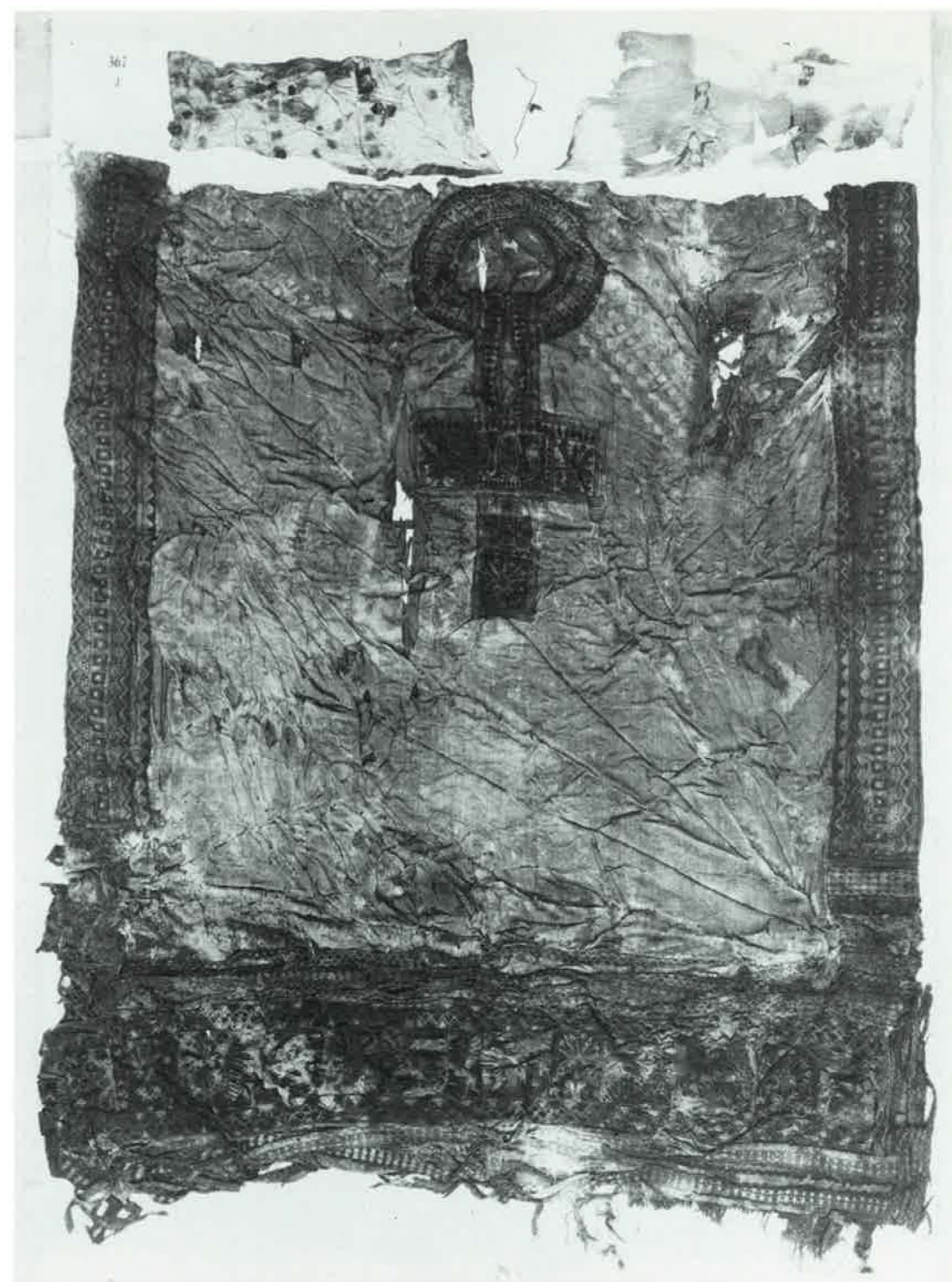


38. Button neck-opening from a bag-tunic, found at the Workmen's Village, Amarna (author's photograph)





39. Decorated bag-tunic now in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden (E1, courtesy of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden)



40. Decorated bag-tunic from the tomb of Tut'ankhamun (courtesy of the Griffith Institute, Oxford)





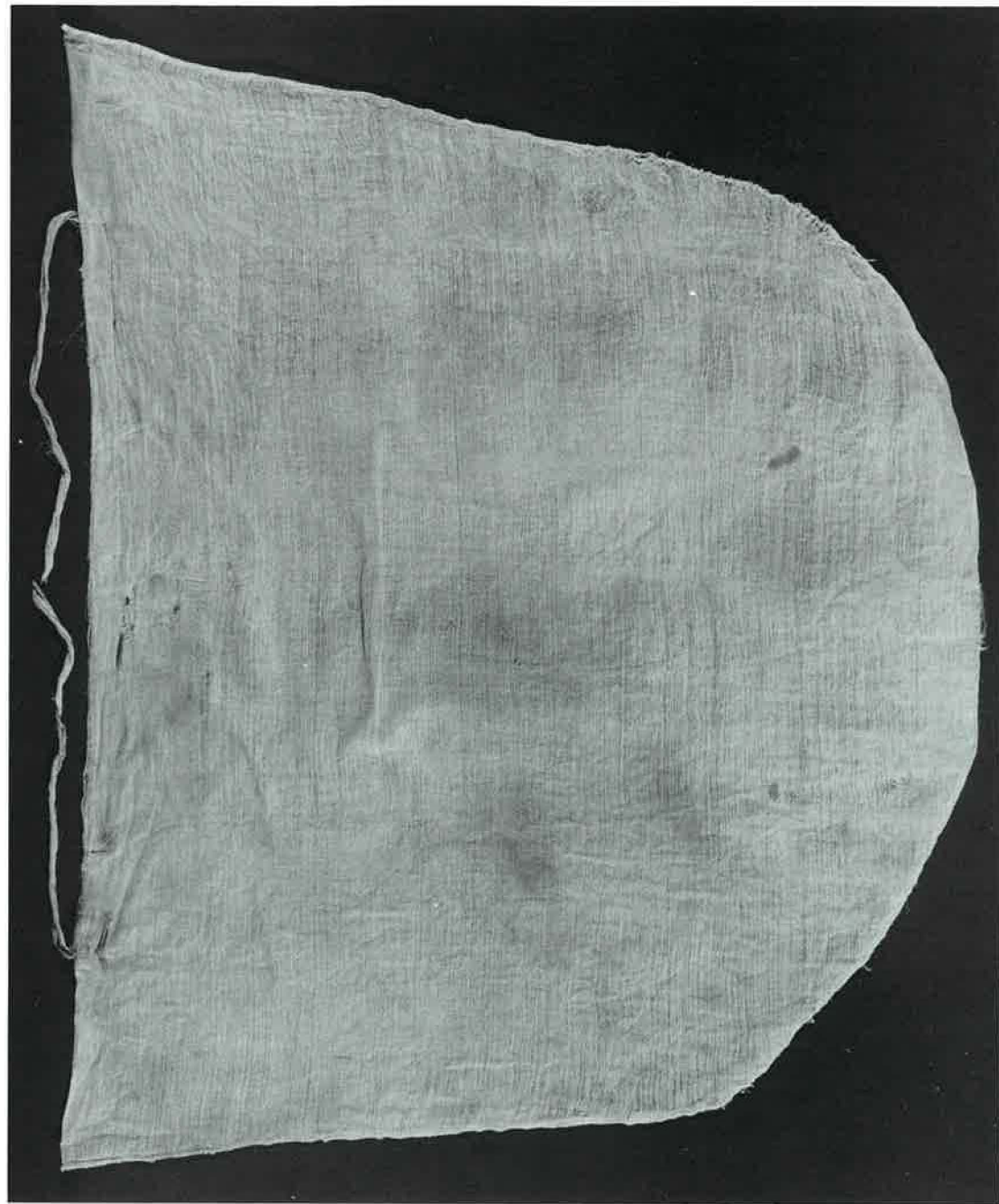
*Fig. 69. — Tunica invernale.*

41. Decorated bag-tunic from the tomb of Kha (after Schiaparelli, 1927, fig. 69)



42. Half bag-tunic now in the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels (E.2486, courtesy of the Koninklijke Musea, Brussels)





43. A kerchief found just outside the tomb of Tut'ankhamun, Thebes (MMA 09.184.219, Gift of Theodore M. Davis, 1909, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)



44. Head wearing the kerchief from Tut'ankhamun's mummification equipment (see plate 43, MMA 09.184.219, Gift of Theodore M. Davis, 1909, courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)



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